The Shakerite

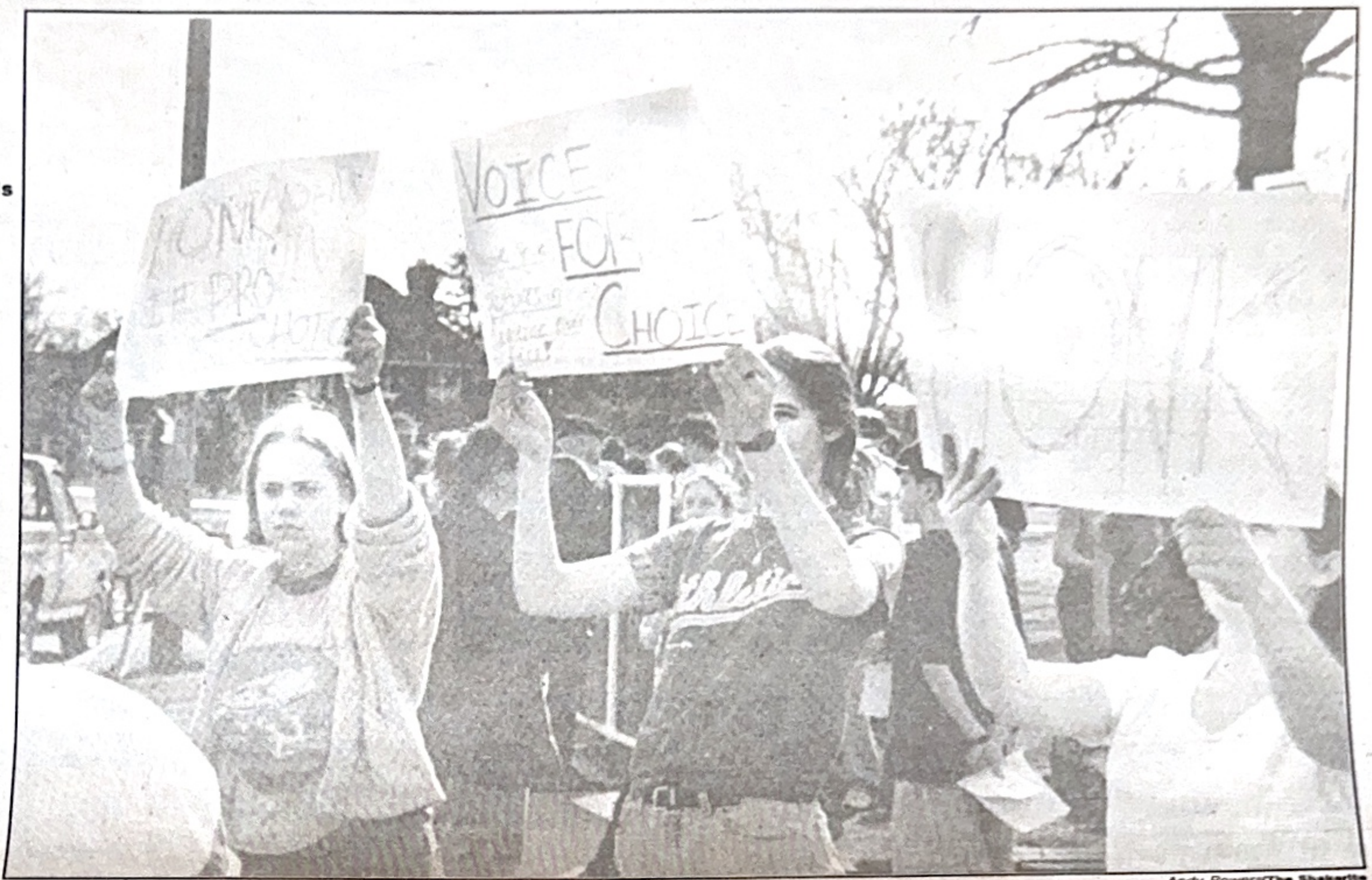
surprise
SURPRISE
A surprise awaits you in the center of the paper. Keep in mind the date at the top of the page. Pull it out and enjoy!

March 31, 2000 • Volume 70 • Issue 6 • Shaker Heights High School • 15911 Aldersyde Drive • Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120

Abortion issue hits home

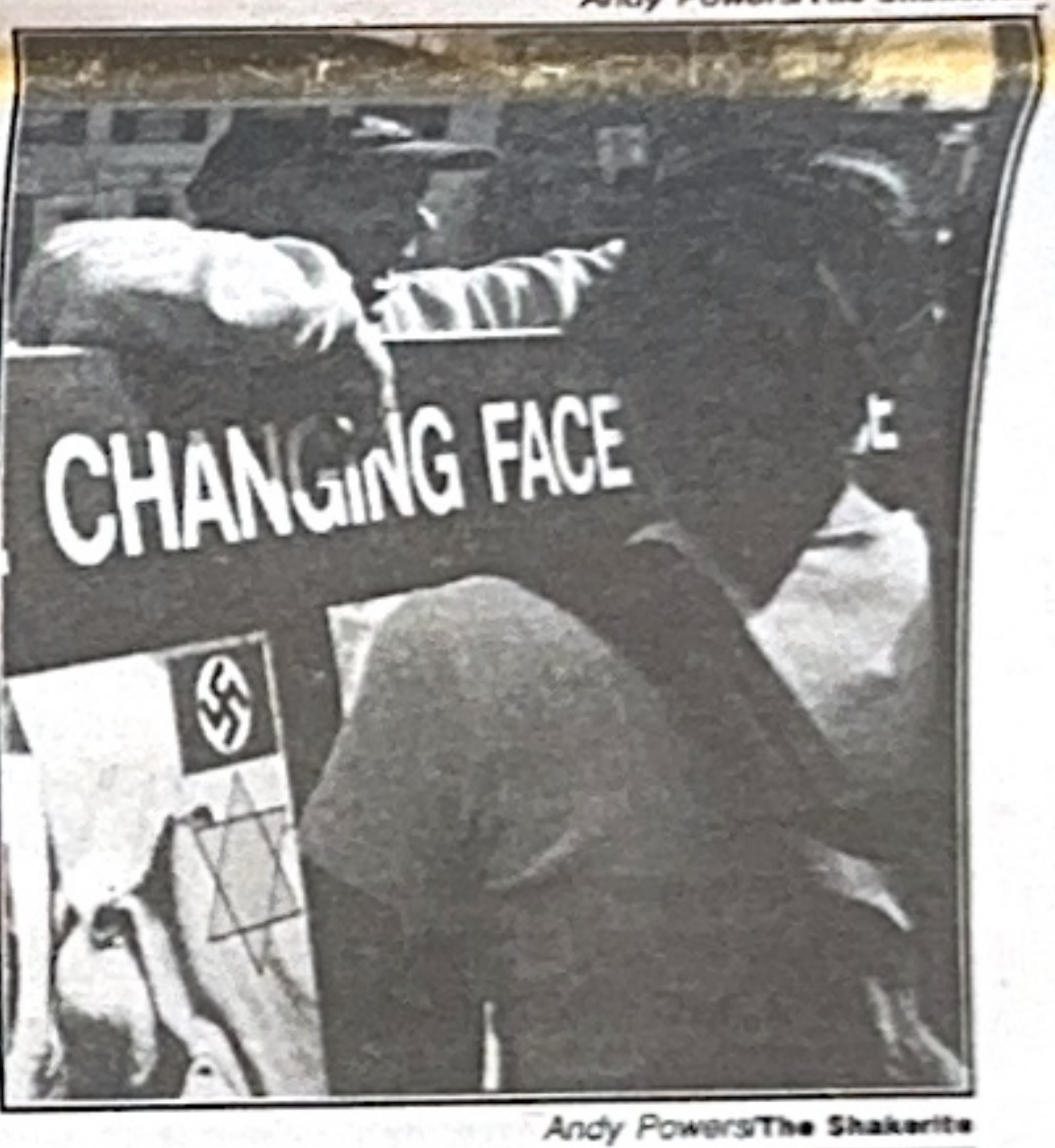
• Graphic images spark student counter-protest

By Meghan Dubyak amd Lisa Samols
News co-editor and co-editor in chief



Andy Powers/The Shakerite

Freshmen Miranda Robinson, Liz Campbell and Laura Coscarelli protest Greater Cleveland Life Link's anti-abortion demonstration outside the high school March 24. At right, students debate the issue with a Life Link member. The group held up posters outside the school on the mornings of March 23 and 24.



Andy Powers/The Shakerite

Anti-abortion activists rallied on the oval March 23 and 24. The group distributed anti-abortion literature and held large signs comparing images of Holocaust victims, lynched African-Americans and bloody fetuses.

"I think this is an outrage," junior Lisa Brunengraber said. "This is the last thing I want to see in the morning."

The protest, titled "God is going back to school," was organized and sponsored by Greater Cleveland Life Link. According to the group's director, Tom Raddell, the protest was meant to bring religion back to school after the separation of church and state was upheld in *Engel v. Vitale,* 1962.

"What has replaced God is metal detectors, guns, violence, rape," Raddell said. "We no longer teach a moral basis or the 10 commandments."

The group has visited several other college and high school campuses in Northeast Ohio.

"We're not targeting Shaker, we're targeting high schools," Raddell said. He said that one in 25 high school females will have an abortion before they graduate.

"Our purpose is to educate people about what abortion is," Raddell said. "It's an act of violence, and there are consequences for men and women."

"I think it's pathetic that they need to rely on shock value to get their point across."

GRANT MEACHAM
freshman

The displayed pictures were intended to demonstrate possible consequences of abortion.

"We're here because they're not showing you these pictures in school," Life Link member Mary Ellen Urmin said.

One of Raddell's reasons for targeting high schools is his belief that students are taught to solve problems with violence.

"Abortion is an act of violence," Raddell said. "We're teaching kids to solve their problems without violence. We saw the acts of violence at Columbine. We're now seeing the fruit of the violent mindset."

For students, the protest was reminiscent of a November 1999 day when members of a Cleveland Gideon group distributed miniature copies of the New Testament to students as they walked to school.

Under the First Amendment, protesters are allowed to voice opinions on public property, which includes the sidewalk surrounding schools.

"One of the issues of democracy is free protest and free speech," Superintendent Mark Freeman said.

Some faculty and students felt that the protest had no place at the high school.

"I feel they have a right to their opinion," science teacher Bill Scanlon said. "But I don't feel that this is the place to demonstrate. I feel that they would be more effective at an abortion clinic or government building."

The First Amendment allows protesters to state their opinions verbally or visually, but not physically. Senior Rachel Gray said that the pro-life protesters overstepped their bounds. According to Gray, when she went to talk to the protesters, one member grabbed her arm as she

SEE **PROTEST,** PAGE 2

π DAY A SMASHING SUCCESS

Walter Slovikovski and Allan Slawson are all pied up in the courtyard March 14. Students bought tickets for a chance to hit them with a pie on pi day, 3/14. All proceeds went to Harvest for Hunger.

Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

Tree-planting honors Penny Chang

By Karen Jenks
News co-editor

About 60 people gathered at the public library March 16 to honor Penny Chang by planting a Chinese dogwood on the anniversary of her death.

"We must never forget Penny and her family's unspeakable grief," Superintendent Mark Freeman said.

Chang was killed as she walked to school March 16, 1999. Shaker graduate Scott Struthers ('96), was sentenced to life in prison for her murder.

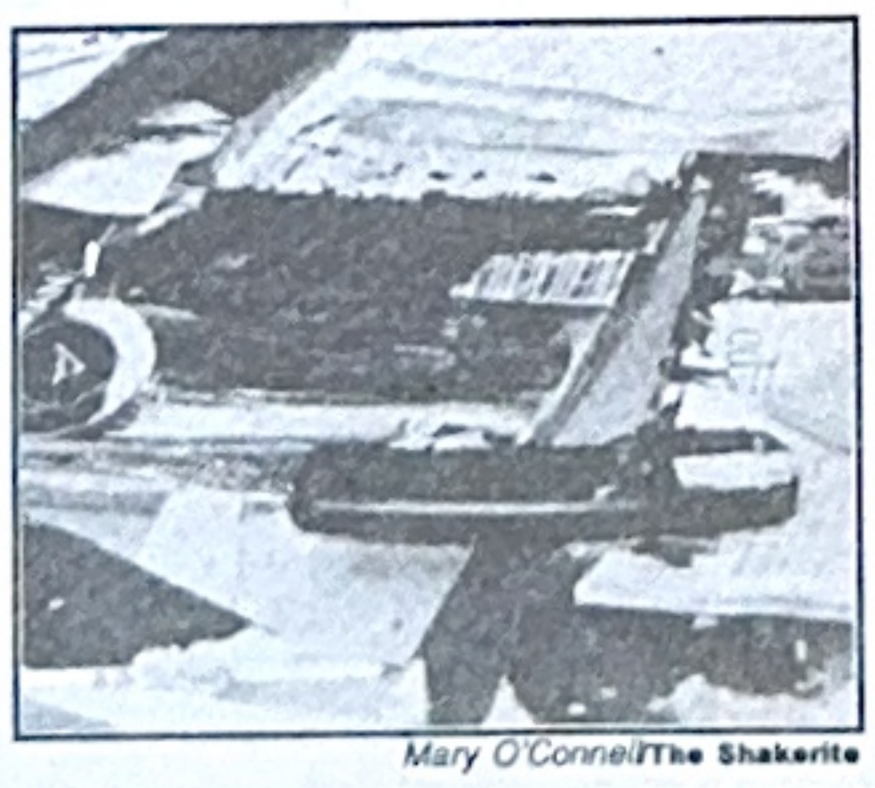
Carolyn Cole, 2002 class president, spoke of Chang's death. Dr. Ching Lung Chang, Penny's father, said he hopes these tragedies will never happen again.

Mayor Judy Rawson read aloud a plaque that decorates a rock near the tree. It reads "Penny Chang, 1984-1999."

In closing, a librarian shared patrons' memories of Chang.

Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

A Chinese dogwood was planted for Penny Chang.



Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

Paint was splattered in the art room over a weekend. During the same weekend, a computer room was broken into and programs were accessed. Faculty members were told to take extra caution.

Vandalism, break-ins prompt cautionary measures

• Art room and computer lab involved

By Joseph Tartakoff
Staff reporter

Two high school classrooms were broken into and vandalized over the weekend of March 18 and 19. No suspects have been detained, but school security officials believe students were responsible.

"There have been thefts at the high school before, but they have always been months apart. This is the first time that it has really been criminal mischief," District Safety Coordinator Michael Klima said.

Paint was spilled on the floor, desk, and chairs of art room 012. It appeared that the vandals had broken in by removing the bolts from the classroom doorway.

"There was a lot of serious damage done to the art

SEE **BREAK-INS,** PAGE 2

Seeking steps to success

• Unit principal Bursi seeks solutions to ninth grade acheivement problem

**By Meghan Dubyak
and Karen Jenks**
News co-editors

Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

Bursi counsels a ninth grade student. Bursi has taken several initiatives to target poor ninth grade achievement such as peer counseling and study hall and study skill improvement.

With one third of the freshman class failing one or more classes, the ninth grade achievement problem persists at Shaker.

"Ninth grade is pivotal because it's the foundation for the high school experience," Director of Curriculum James Paces said.

The school system has taken initiatives to improve achievement and is waiting to see the results.

Paces said Shaker offers several programs such as the PROBE proficiency review program, the Bridges transition program, math labs and a kindergarten resource program among others.

Many educators have been wondering what the source of poor ninth grade achievement is.

Ninth grade unit principal Marianne Bursi noted the unchecked failure in middle school could be a source of problems.

"Students who are not successful at the middle school come to the high school and are expected to perform well here, but they're still the same person," Bursi said.

Bursi, in her first year as an assistant principal, has already taken steps toward improved freshman performance, including distribut***ing a list of "Steps to Success."***

The steps cover attendence, participation and homework skills.

"I think Ms. Bursi's steps are well thought out and would work if people tried to apply them," freshman Camilla Cullis said. "I think that these steps would help those people that need this type of planning to raise their grades."

Another of Bursi's programs is what she calls peer counseling.

"I set up a student with ***a [peer] model they really admire academically," Bursi said.***

The peer counseling is designed to encourage beneficial peer pressure.

Bursi set up the program to discourage repetition of ninth grade.

"My concerns are the multiple Fs," Bursi said. "To have kids repeating a failing experience is not beneficial."

Bursi also hopes to make study halls more productive by breaking them up into study tables, teaming a teacher up with one to five students and having them meet once a week.

The other four days of the week would be spent studying within the small group.

"They need someone to look after them on a weekly basis," Bursi said.

Every year, freshmen are quick to note the rigid ninth-grade curriculum.

Ninth graders are required to take four courses. Most students also take a foreign language, leaving room for one elective.

"I've heard from the counselors that there aren't enough electives," Bursi said. "Maybe that could be an area of improvement."

Some freshmen, despite the lack of choice in curriculum, are able to see its long-term benefits.

"I find the curriculum kind of boring," Cullis said. "I do, however, think that it is necessary. All the things we are learning this year are going to help us in the next three years of classes."

Bursi's steps to success

- Attend all assigned classes daily, arrive on time
- Bring required materials to class
- Complete homework assignments on time
- Utilize the academic programs and services
- Keep an organized calendar

Library fight raises security issues

By Joe Tartakoff
Staff reporter

A fight between Warrensville and Shaker high school students erupted at the Shaker Main Library's parking lot on Feb 23.

Since then, the city has increased police patrols around the library building.

"We are working with the police to ensure that the library continues to be secure.

"We have not added extra security inside the library, however, because the incident did not entail people inside the building," Library Director Edrice Ivory said.

The fight involved 12 students.

Nine were arrested, including six from Shaker. There were no injuries, but one car was smashed in the fight.

"I think it's sad that people can't settle their differences without fighting," freshman Nathan Emery said.

Ivory said that she has not seen a decrease in the number of Shaker students going to the library since the fight.

"I still go to the Main Library because I still think it's a pretty safe place to go," freshman Carlos Piepenburg said.

Sophomore Matthew Charnas agreed.

"I think that Shaker Heights public buildings are very safe and I'm confident that they will remain that way," he said.

The library offers a variety of services to high school students, in addition to its general collection.

"We offer high school students the teen center, where they can work in a more relaxed area, using computers and listening to music.

"We are also going to begin an art competition this year," Ivory said.

> ***"We are working with the police to ensure that the library continues to be secure. We have not added extra security inside the library."***
>
> **EDRICE IVORY**
> Library Director

17-year-olds denied vote

By Stephanie Gabarik
Layout editor

Many registered 17-year-olds were not permitted to vote on March 7th because their names were not in the poll book.

Senior Rachel Sears, one such student, was told that since her name was not in the poll book she should try other buildings. Eventually she gave up.

"I'm disappointed. I was really excited to vote," she said.

According to Gwen Dillingham, director of the Cuyahoga County Board of Elections, this was a poll worker error.

Dillingham also said that anyone who registered to vote may vote in the election, regardless of inclusion in the book.

"In the event that someone's name is not in the book, a provisional ballot is handed to the voter," Dillingham said. "We should have trained the workers to handle provisional ballots."

"My apologies go out to these kids who we want to vote and couldn't," said Dillingham. "It is an important right."

Illegal parking monitored

By Julie Redline
Staff reporter

Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

Under a school policy, illegally parked cars are photographed.

Rumors are flying through the halls that illegally parked cars are being photographed and reported to school authorities.

Unit principal John Addison said this policy has been active for years.

Some students feel illegally parked cars should be punished.

"If you park illegally you should get in trouble because that's not fair," junior Charlotte Jacobs said.

Others feel differently.

"[School involvement] is wrong just because it's the police's job. The school teaches us, and that's all they should do," junior Matt Bartley said.

Mitchell reiterates fundraising guidelines

news BRIEFS

In a PA announcement on March 14, interim principal Jerry Mitchell clarified the school's regulations for fundraising.

In his memo to faculty and club advisory, Mitchell said "Many students are selling candy during the school day and these sales have been very disruptive to teaching and learning."

Mitchell outlined the rules for fundraising activities by reminding the student body that any fundraising for a school activity needs to be approved by the principal and sales must not take place during the school day. Mitchell also said that fundraising for non-school activities is not permitted on campus. Students who violate the restrictions will have their candy or other items confiscated.

Meghan Dubyak

Levy passes without much opposition

On March 7, voters in Shaker Heights registered their opinions in the form of voting ballots, and passed the school levy that had been on the ballot for the Shaker schools.

The levy raised property taxes $288 per year for a $100,000 house, which will generate $6.5 million more per year for the district. This increase will primarily support the growing salaries of the district's employees.

House Bill 920, passed in 1976, ruled that Ohio school districts may not collect increasing amounts of tax money proportional to the rising property values without calling for a new levy. Property levels in Shaker have risen 45.6 percent in the last decade.

"The Shaker community is so attractive because of its architecture, its schools and its diversity," senior Justin Fuller said.

Karen Jenks

'rite UP

•The **Federal Reserve Challenge Team** won the fourth district championship March 13 at the Federal Reserve Bank. Seniors **Beth Dolinsky**, **Austin Frank**, **Alex Kolb**, **Jonathan Munetz** and **Gordon Scott** were advised by economics teacher **Diana Jones**. Each team member and Jones will receive $4,000 and an all-expenses paid trip to Washington, DC to compete in the national tournament.

•Senior **Crystal Jones** and junior **Natalie Shook** received the Governor's Award of Excellence for their artwork at the Ohio Governor's Show in Columbus. They will be honored April 9 in Columbus. They were two out of 25 students given the award.

•The **Latin Club** attended the Ohio Junior Classical League Convention March 10-12. They placed first in academic points per capita, second in the small club scrapbook contest, sixth in the upper level Certamen team, and first in the T-shirt design humor category. The team consisted of freshman **Edward Cormany**, sophomore **David Simmons-Duffin**, juniors **Eric Anderson** and **Mark Lee** and seniors **Alder Brannin**, **Christine Powers** and **Dashi Singham**. Team members also won individual awards.

•The **Wind Ensemble** and **Symphonic Band** were given "superior" ratings at the Ohio Music Educators Association contest March 17-18.

•At the National History Day competition on March 18, sophomores **David Simmons-Duffin** and **Matthew Smith** took first and third place in the historical research paper contest; juniors **Olympia Colizoli**, **Anahid Thompson** and **Sarah Williams** won second place in the group performance contest; sophomore **Lindsay Kocab** took first in the individual project contest; juniors **Aaron Greenspan**, **James Stephens** and **Phillip Wallach** took first place in the group documentary contest; juniors **Caitlin Bell**, **Karen Distelhorst**, **Laura Englehart** and **Meghan Whitehouse** took second in group documentary; juniors **Chloe Hill**, **Amy Lazarus** and **Sarah Morgenstern** were given special recognition in the group documentary contest; juniors **Meredith Jones** and **Katie O'Brien** were given special recognition in the group documentary; junior **Rachel Kiwi** was given special recognition in the research paper contest. The students' advisers were **Tim Mitchell**, **Rhona Pessel** and **Linda Thurston**.

CORRECTIONS

These corrections all pertain to the article in News last month titled "Proficiency testing changes in '04".

- Only the state can decide what happens to proficiency tests, not individual school districts.
- Ninth grade tests will be gradually phased out.
- Tenth grade tests will be gradually phased in.

The Shakerite regrets the errors.

Activist educator gives insight on homophobia in schools

By Rebecca Wolf
Staff reporter

"Growing up without knowing any gays and hearing gay slurs was a lot more damaging than being hit upside the head with a two by four," said Dan Woog during a question and answer session in C.J. Bott's social issues class.

Woog, a high school teacher from Westbrook, Connnecticut, a suburb like Shaker, travels around the country making presentations and giving workshops on homophobia.

He was invited to Shaker by the Gay-Straight Alliance, and spoke to students and staff on March 6.

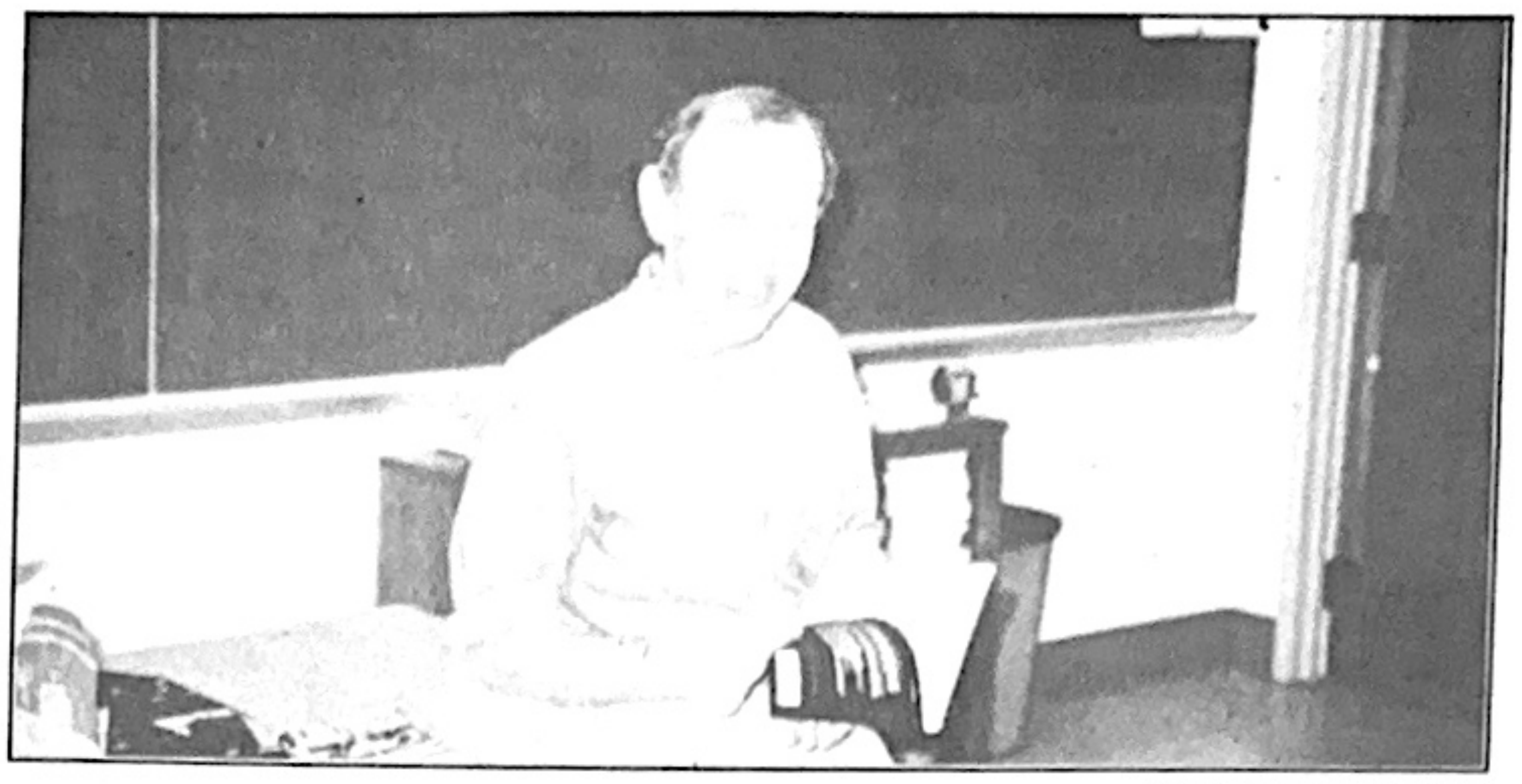
Students from Bott's classes enjoyed Woog's talk.

"I think it was really brave of him to come and talk to people," senior A.J. Yowler said.

Woog discussed what it was like to grow up gay, and ways to combat homophobia.

"In high school I didn't hear about gays and thought I was the only one," Woog said.

He now teaches at his high school alma mater and leads the school's Alliance.



Mary O'Connell/**The Shakerite**

"In high school I didn't hear about gays and thought I was the only one," said Dan Woog to a group of students. Woog addressed the faculty and C.J. Bott's social issues classes.

Woog is also a soccer coach at the high school.

"Kids have really opened up to me since I came out. I feel like I'm a lot closer with the kids on the team," Woog said.

According to Woog, the average student hears gay slurs about 25 times a day.

"I don't know if the intent is homophobia, but the slurs are a problem. They could offend students who are gay," science teacher Brian Engel said.

Students feel that homophobia is often overlooked.

"It's less addressed than other racial issues. People have to become aware of it," freshman Alliance member Elana Averbach said.

The Alliance brought Woog to Shaker as part of its effort to increase awareness. Woog held a workshop for the Alliance about strategies for combating homophobia.

"He told us to use humor to counter people's opinions instead of getting all up in their face," Averbach said.

Bott agrees with the importance of education about homophobia.

"Homophobia comes out of not being educated. It comes from fear of being associated with gay people and being thought of as one of them," Bott said.

In his address to the faculty, Woog mentioned fear of being thought of as gay and parent reactions as reasons why teachers don't address homophobia.

The Alliance asked Woog to speak at the faculty meeting because they feel that homophobia is not being adequately addressed in classrooms.

Students felt that Woog's speeches were helpful.

"I think he could have even influenced someone really homophobic," Averbach said. "Mr. Woog told us that tolerance can be learned over time."

Senior project requirement changes prompt complaints from seniors

By Carmel Pryor
Staff reporter

It's March and senior project is approaching fast. Yet many seniors are fed up with the guidelines and criteria for project.

There is a disparity between those who are planning to go on project and those who are debating whether it is worth the time or effort.

"The requirements are there to separate the lazy people from the people who really want to go," senior Ericka West said.

According to former project director Baird Wiehe, when Shaker first established project in 1971, 10 percent of the senior class could go. In the mid 1980s the entire senior class was eligible. However, many students failed to perform well second semester or during project, resulting in numerous faculty complaints of absences, truancy and poor grades.

In response, late principal A. Jack Rumbaugh raised the minimum letter grade required from a D to a C, capped excused absences at seven and allowed for no unexcused absences

"The project was either going to fall apart or we had to strengthen it so it would remain," Wiehe said.

> *"The requirements are there to separate the lazy people from the people who really want to go."*
>
> **ERICKA WEST**
> senior

Changes didn't end there. Among the changes this year are early deadlines. By April 18, seniors must have a calendar planning their daily schedules for project.

Senior project director Walter Slovikovski explained that because many schools now compete for the same projects, it is better to be prepared early.

Also, there was a lack of sponsor involvement in the past. The new deadlines require more communication between sponsor and student.

"This is exciting. [Senior project] is meant to motivate kids and give them a chance to do something they'll never get to do," Slovikovski said.

Approximately 75 percent of the senior class applied to go on senior project, but only 45 percent are expected to actually qualify.

"The deadlines are ridiculous! [Senior project] is good in that it encourages students to do well, but the paperwork is stupid," senior Jacob Feitler said.

"I have a lot more going on than just [project]. It is a waste of time going so I might as well stay," senior Jumaane Hall said. "I already have a job and [project] is working for free. It's like slavery!"

Senior project begins May 8.

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• Vandalism causes security concerns

BREAK-INS
FROM PAGE 1

room. I'm not sure why they vandalized this room," said art teacher James Hoffman.

Hoffman's room was the primary target.

Art students were surprised by the break-in.

"A lot of important stuff was ruined - papers and computer equipment. Our class is still using the room, though," said freshman William Bostwick.

The art room was not the only classroom broken into.

"We also discovered that someone broke into the computer room over the same weekend and accessed computer programs there. We believe that the same people were responsible for both break-ins," Klima said.

Freshman William Benish was startled by both incidents.

"I think it shows poorly on the school's security. I am not comfortable with the fact that people can gain unlimited access to any room they want when school is out," he said.

> ***"I think it shows poorly on the school's security. I am not comfortable with the fact that people can gain unlimited access to any room they want when school is out."***
>
> **WILLIAM BENISH**
> freshman

In a faculty memo dated March 20, the day that the break-ins were discovered, interim Principal Jerry Mitchell wrote,

"I would appreciate it if every faculty member would be especially careful about securing keys and classrooms."

Klima said security was investigating why the alarms that serve the computer room and art room were not triggered.

Shaker rated in need of improvement on state report card

By Jennifer Broadbent
Staff reporter

The state Board of Education recently issued school district report cards based on proficiency tests, student attendance and graduation rates. Shaker Heights ranked above the state average in achievement.

Overall, the state Board rated Shaker in need of continuous improvement.

Shaker met 17 of 27 standards overall, yet met all standards for only the twelfth grade proficiency exam.

"I think Shaker was portrayed very poorly. We did not get many points compared to the maximum," said Cindy Courtright, Shaker graduate and mother of two high school students.

Proficiency tests are given to all Ohio students in grades four, six, nine and 12 to test citizenship, mathematics, reading, writing and science. Every student must pass all tests except for the twelfth grade exam in order to graduate from high school.

At Shaker, 66.6 percent of students pass all parts of the ninth grade test. The state average is about 61.9 percent.

The Ohio General Assembly requires that fourth graders pass the reading portion of their test to be promoted to fifth grade.

Shaker's fourth grade reading passage rate was 72.2 percent. That is well above the state average of 59.2 percent.

However, the fourth grade tests in other subjects, notably math, did not meet the state's standard.

"I was surprised the younger kids' proficiency tests weren't very good. They didn't even meet state requirements," junior Sam Zimmer said.

Shaker's attendance rate of 95.4 percent exceeds the minimum state average. Shaker also exceeds state standards with a 96.8 percent graduation rate.

School districts are allowed to choose among three levels of tests. Shaker students always take the hardest, but this choice is not factored into the report.

Also, in most districts students with disabilities like autism do not take the tests or do not report their scores. In Shaker most disabled students take the tests and all scores are submitted to the state Board of Education.

YSU professor analyzes proficiency tests

Youngstown State University professor Randy Hoover and a rising chorus of educators from around Ohio are firing proficiency test objections at state legislators. Their protests have prompted three state senators to seek a hold on this year's tests.

Hoover told *The Plain Dealer* that the tests are flawed because student performance is associated with social and economic status.

Hoover examined scores from a variety of grades in light of 40 in-school and out-of-school factors. In-school factors included class size, per-pupil expenditures and teacher salaries. Out-of-school factors included family income and property values. Hoover's findings suggest that test scores correlate to economic, social, cultural and environmental factors that are not in the realm of school control.

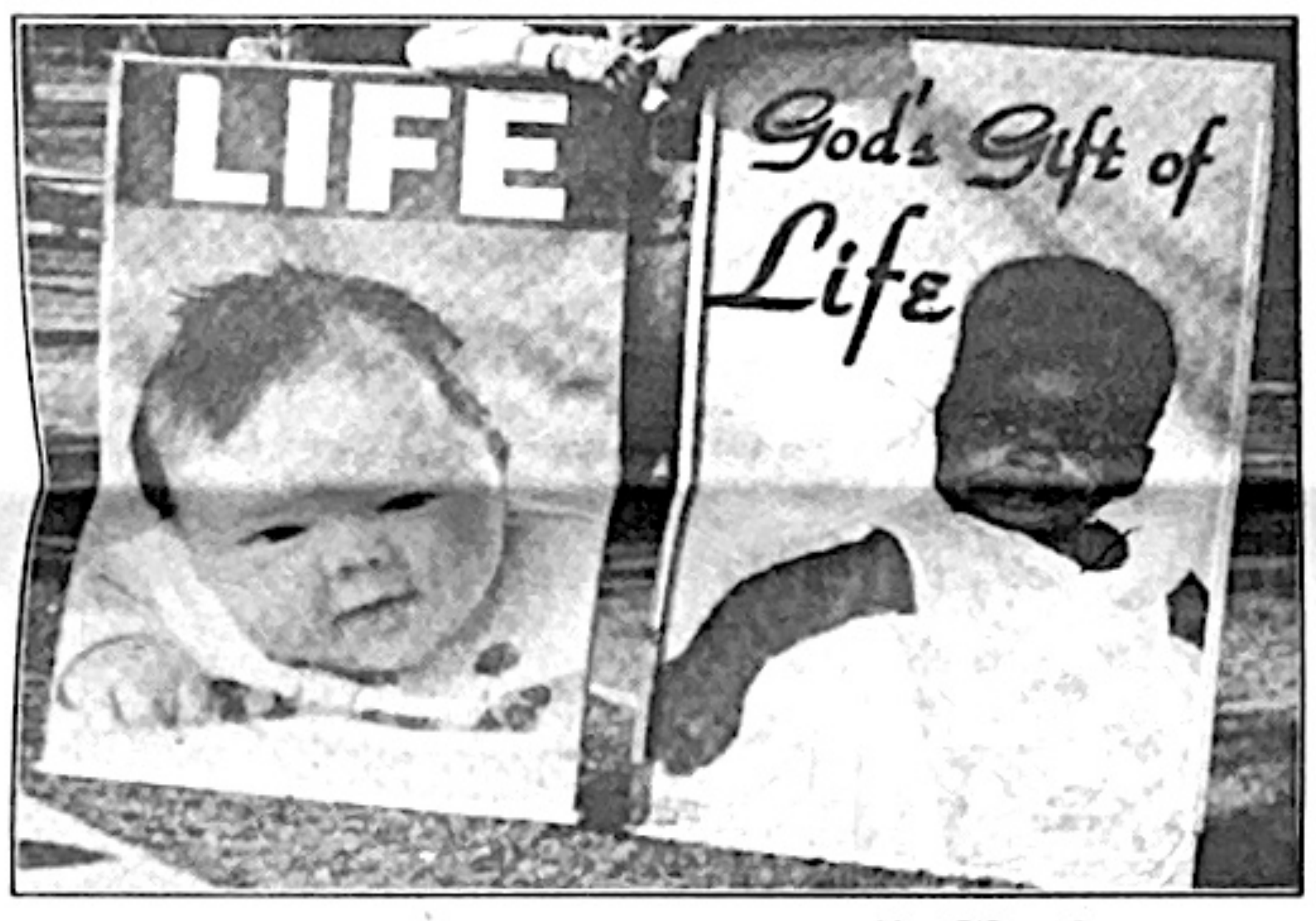
"There should be other factors to judge school districts, like student diversity and special programs," science teacher Charles Morgan said.

Sophomore Emilie Vicchio has a suggestion for the senators in Columbus. "Instead of stressing out little kids, they need to get off their lazy butts and go view the schools and talk to the people."

Leonicia Berry

• Students use posters to counter anti-abortion rally

PROTEST
FROM PAGE 1


Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

Anti-abortion activists gathered outside the high school last week, encouraging observers to protect the "gift of life."

approached and would not release her. Gray spoke with police about the incident the next day.

Raddell denied the event.

"Unfortunately, it was totally fabricated. There was no evidence that it ever happened," he said.

Police said that the protest ran smoothly overall.

Students debated with the demonstrators before and after school. About 25 students held pro-choice signs and passed out literature in counter-protest.

"I think they have every right to be here, but so do we," said freshman Jessica Herzfeld, who helped organize the morning's counter-protest. "People should hear both sides."

Other students hoped to discourage Life Link from returning.

"We're not worried about their issue, but just getting rid of them at the high school," freshman Jill Porter said.

The afternoon protest was organized by freshmen Edward Ceaser and Ping D'Souza.

"We were both shaken that they had the nerve to come here with their nasty pictures to disturb our routine," Ceaser said. "If they came with facts, not disgusting pictures, it would be a different issue."

Members of Life Link appreciated Shaker's interest in the demonstration.

"In a country where free speech is allowed, this is a great forum," Urmin said.

Some students felt that the graphic photographs of aborted fetuses were unnecessary.

"I think it's pathetic that they need to rely on shock value to get their point across," freshman Grant Meacham said.

Not all students objected to Life Link's presence.

"I think it's good to let women know the things that could happen to the baby," junior Dante Moore said.

According to junior Tasha Taylor, the protests didn't have much effect on Shaker students.

"I don't think it matters," Taylor said. "If you don't do it [have abortions], why should it bother you?"

Freshman Liz Campbell said that the protests did impact the whole school.

"It's bringing up other issues, like religion at school and causing fights between friends," she said.

Some teachers felt obligated to discuss the issue with their classes.

Scanlon said that he had not planned to discuss the issue, but decided that the protest must be addressed in class.

"Now that I've seen the pictures, I'm going to mention it in class and ask students how they felt about it, and maybe have a discussion," Scanlon said.

Many Onaway and Woodbury parents and children also saw the pictures as they drove to school. Freeman sent a letter to parents explaining that the group was not invited and urging them to take alternate routes to and from school to avoid the posters.

"The school district and city have asked the organization not to display the placards during dismissal time tomorrow [Friday] afternoon, but we have received no reply," Freeman wrote.

On Friday morning, more posters were set up around the back of the Oval, closer to Onaway.

"It is regrettable that this group has chosen to expose children to these images," Freeman wrote. "The school district and the city of Shaker Heights are doing all they can to ensure that the protests are orderly and within the law. We ask your cooperation in protecting our children."

Parents responded to Freeman's request.

"I'm making a special trip to go around," said Lorna Thomas, a mother of four.

Other Onaway parents reacted with the same disgust as high school students.

"There must be a way, legally, to make them miserable enough to leave," said Paula Reed. "We just have to find it."

News in the Nation

① San Francisco, CA
Students mock marry as part of economics course

As part of a semester-long Economics class at Lowell high school, students have the opportunity to partake in the "Game of Life," where they "wed" a classmate and fast forward through simulations of marriage, child-rearing and retirement. The game is intended to give students experience about marriage and relationships that they can use in their lives. Students and faculty there are now considering adding a class to specifically address interpersonal skills, rather than just adding to the health curriculum.

② Paterson, New Jersey
Parent notification mandatory for abortion

At John F. Kennedy High, debate is raging on a recent New Jersey law that obligates doctors performing abortions to notify parents if the patient is a minor. While the law does not require consent, doctors are prohibited from performing an abortion without signed proof of parental awareness. Students are concerned about the constitutionality of the law, and claim that it is a violation of privacy. However, the law has been temporarily blocked as it is under consideration in the state courts.

③ Claremont, California
Students declare majors for high school

Students at Claremont High School will soon have the option of declaring a major as part of their diploma. Over half of the credits that students currently earn as electives would have to be taken in the major course of study. The major program, which will begin with incoming freshmen in the fall, will start with options in the fine arts area, but administrators hope to expand the program to include majors in business, government, law or engineering.

④ Norristown, Pennsylvania
District to alter name because of prison

The Norristown Area School District is considering changing its name to end negative associations with the surrounding borough, which is known for its prison and high crime rate. Possible new district names include the Stoney Creek School District of Montgomery County and the Central Montgomery County School District. While some students and faculty members hope that a name change will bring lower interest rates on bonds, others would rather raise student achievement to earn a better reputation.

compiled by Beth Dolinsky

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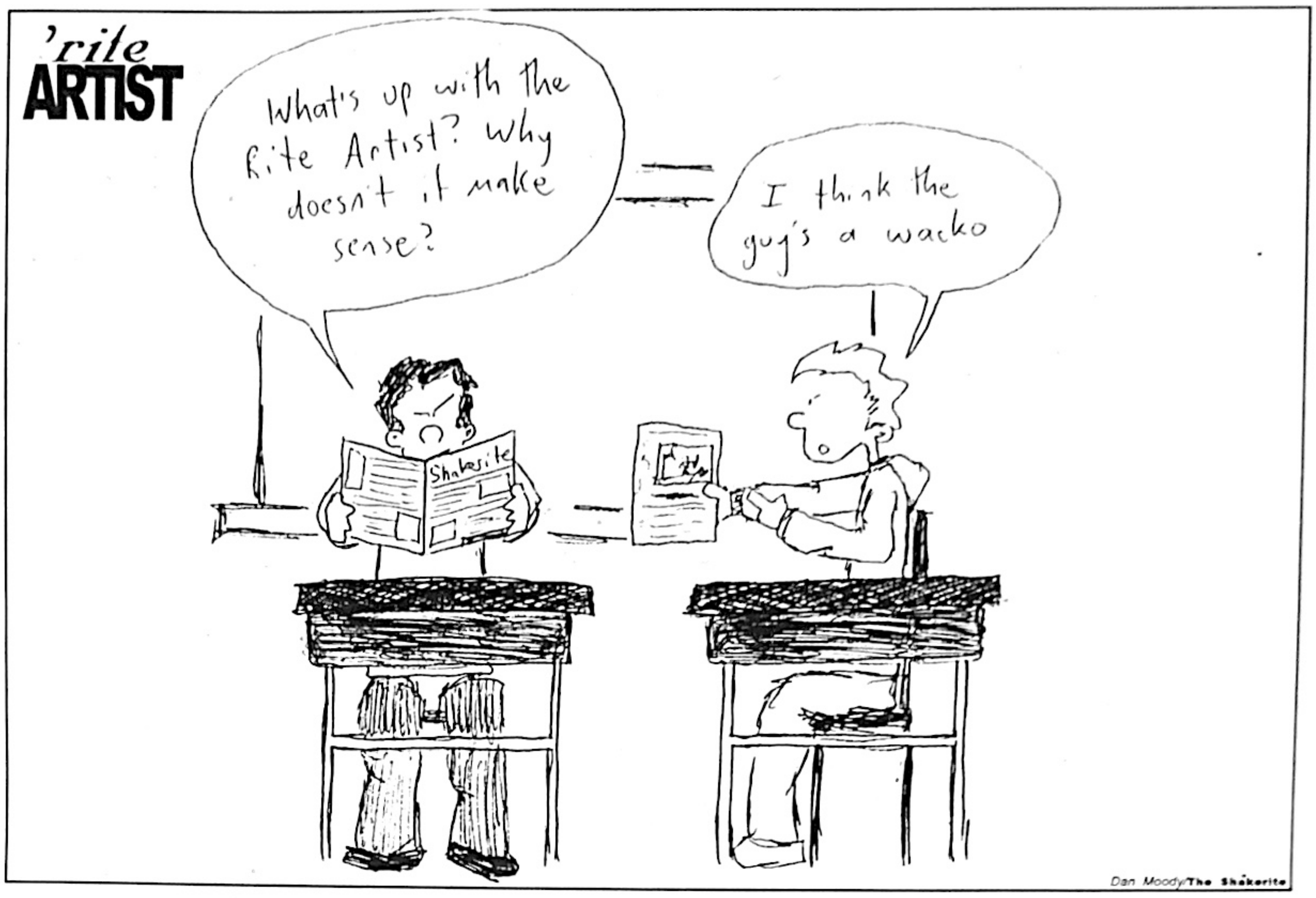
'rite ARTIST


What's up with the Rite Artist? Why doesn't it make sense?
I think the guy's a wacko
Shakerite

Dan Moody/The Shakerite

Activists should spare kids their gruesome images

'rite IDEA

Where do many Onaway students see their first R-rated content? No, not at the Colony. Outside their own elementary school.

Last week's demonstration by anti-abortion activists placed gruesome photographs of aborted fetuses in plain view of Onaway and Woodbury students, including children who are only 5 or 6 years old.

The group, Greater Cleveland Life Link, used their First Amendment right to freedom of speech and didn't break any laws by coming to our school. But they should have used better judgment when choosing their location.

By assembling around the oval only feet away from Onaway Elementary School, the anti-abortion protesters may not have been breaking any laws, but they were violating basic moral and ethical values. When the dismissal bell rang inside Onaway last Thursday and Friday, students in kindergarten through fourth grade ran for the doors, excited about their after school plans. Instead of walking outside to a sunny spring day, elementary students were struck instead by pure horror when they saw the propaganda brought to make an impact on high school students.

Forcing young children to witness such grotesque images can be detrimental and should not be accepted by the Shaker community. Many children at Onaway have yet to be introduced to the idea of pregnancy, let alone abortion. The gravity of what they saw is incomprehensible to their growing minds.

Several Onaway parents picked up their children from school and found them in tears because of the disturbing photograph of a bloody fetus. Because of the harm the demonstration was doing, Superintendent Mark Freeman sent a letter to Onaway and Woodbury parents, encouraging them to take an alternate route to and from school in order to shield their children from the pictures.

Greater Cleveland Life Link said their goal was to educate teenagers about their position on abortion. They had no right to traumatize two elementary schools at the same time.

Given that the demonstrators believe in protecting young lives, their disregard for the Shaker's youngest students is nothing but hypocrisy.

the TOP 10

Things that you never say to a police officer:

10. It's not my car, I promise.
9. The lights are cool and all, but what do they mean?
8. I'm sorry, but can I ask you to put *your* seatbelt on?
7. I was just trying to see if you could keep up.
6. Um, sir, these handcuffs are too tight.
5. OK, you can frisk me, just don't check my left pocket.
4. I'm sorry I was speeding, but *Baywatch* is on in like 10 minutes.
3. No officer, I wasn't going to the party on _____ street.
2. Hey, will you let me go if I give you some weed from my glove compartment?
1. BUT OFFICER, I WAS THIRSTY AND THIS BEER WAS ALL I HAD!

letters to THE EDITOR

No matter what grade level, test dates are state mandated

To the editors:

As usual, I read the Feb. 25 issue of *The Shakerite* with great interest. Of particular note was the article titled "Proficiency Testing Changes in '04" written by Dan George. Although the article was factual in some respects, there are several serious misrepresentations and implied assumptions that need to be immediately addressed in *The Shakerite*.

Specifically, the following statement is either an egregious distortion or an earnest misunderstanding of what was actually discussed:

"According to Shaker's new policy, eighth graders will no longer be taking the Ninth Grade Proficiency Test. Instead, ninth graders will take the test, as they had been before 1995. The change was made because the district was not happy with the scores they were receiving."

While many Shaker students have not performed on the Ninth Grade Proficiency Tests as well as we would have liked for them to, these students' less than stellar performance was in no way the reason the proficiency test will no longer be given to eighth grade students. When proficiency tests are given is not a decision that is left to an individual district's discretion.

Senate Bill 55 required the development of new graduation exams that students must pass in order to graduate from high school after Sept. 15, 2004. The new exams will measure knowledge and skills that students are expected to have learned in five (5) content areas by the end of tenth grade. The new graduation exams only address minimum tenth grade skill levels prospective graduates must demonstrate in order to receive a high school diploma from a public or chartered nonpublic Ohio high school. In addition to having to pass the new graduation exams, in order to receive an Ohio high school diploma, students must also meet all district curricular requirements.

Students have been required to meet this combination of graduation test and curriculum requirements in order to receive an Ohio diploma since 1994. The current graduation test, the Ninth Grade Proficiency Test, will be administered for the last time in the summer of 2004. Students who do not receive diplomas with the class of 2004 must pass the new graduation exams in any content area of any ninth-grade tests not yet passed.

With respect to the new High School Graduation Qualifying Examinations (HSGQE), a "no fault" administration of the tests for tenth grade students is scheduled for March 2002. The first administration required by Senate Bill 55 to tenth grade students (this school year's seventh grade students) is March 2003. While we will continue to strive to improve student test performance in all areas, when and under what circumstances state-mandated tests will be given is governed by the Ohio legislature and the Ohio Department of Education, not "Shaker's new policy."

Here's hoping that this clarifies the upcoming changes in proficiency test administration. If I can be of further assistance, do not hesitate to contact me.

Reginald C. Blue, Ph.D
Director of Testing

FORUM

From the SAT to the Ohio Proficiency, standardized testing has recently come under attack. By no means do the tests measure intelligence or the quality of the individual test taker. Furthermore, it has come to light that the graders of the Ohio Proficency Test barely meet standards to qualify their ability to assess proficiency.

SAT undermines test-takers' education

• Standardized tests don't promote critical thinking skills

Dashi Singham
Guest 'riter

Have you ever planned for a whole class to do badly on a test so the curve would be really low? I have never seen this work, since many of us don't want to risk getting a bad grade. But if everyone did fail, there would be no way for the teacher to tell who knew the material and who didn't.

The point here is that a lot of the pressure to do well in school doesn't come from parents, teachers, or "the system" but from ourselves.

Many students have a competitive edge in them to some extent, where they want to do better on tests no matter how high or how low the grade. Our social setting places emphasis on ranking students as well, by grading on a curve or computing GPAs.

"A preoccupation with achievement is not only different from, but often detrimental to, a focus on learning," said Alfie Kohn in his book, *The Schools Our Children Deserve*. All the pressure to do well on SATs, AP Tests, and normal classes actually hurts our chances of learning something that is personally meaningful.

Some experts have even gone so far as to say that national testing is tyranny. By having all students learn the same curriculum set by federal standards, the government can control most of what we learn. A focus on testing is harmful because not only are we exposed to certain ideas, values and morals in the classroom, but we are forced to answer and show that we learned these things on tests.

What's tricky is finding a solution to the problem of the huge emphasis on testing. If every student decided not to take the SATs, then the SAT wouldn't matter for college admissions.

If all students agreed not to take classes or tests, there is nothing anyone could do about it. The problem is that some students want the harder curriculum in order to get into college. Essentially, education is perceived as a step towards something else: from high school, to college, to career.

Until students decide to learn for learning's own sake, we will continue to be bribed by promises of future success if we learn certain things now.

One important thing to realize is that many tests are meaningless. Testing normally only measures a fraction of everything within the subject. Many would agree that standardized tests only measure how well someone can take a test.

There is no way to guarantee that testing is all that accurate in measuring what has actually been learned. According to Garner's theories of the seven intelligences, tests only can measure two of the seven. Testing might measure something, but not enough to warrant the large emphasis that is placed on it.

Tests may also be misleading in that we are led to believe that we can determine how intelligent someone is by looking at their test scores. People who continually don't do well on tests might begin to believe that they really are less intelligent than their peers who score higher.

Personally, I don't think that we are capable of measuring someone's intelligence, and there is no need to try to measure it.

However, the harmful part is when we start judging ourselves and others based on test results that have no real meaning. Tests only focus on certain facts and ideas, so there is no way to show the true extent of our knowledge.

I think most of us would rather be in school if there were no tests, This might be considered utopian, in that students would just come to school and there would be no way to see if anyone learned anything. Personally, I really don't think we need to measure how much we've learned. As long as we are exposed to interesting material, there's no need to force us to spend hours outside of school committing things to memory and working to the point where we don't care about the material as long as we get a good grade.

Until students decide to learn for learning's own sake, we will continue to be bribed by promises of future success if we learn certain things now.

In the long run, when will we really need to memorize anything?

Although tests will probably always exist, at least we can ease the pressure on ourselves by realizing that there are more important things that we can get out of education besides scores.

For $8.50 an hour, they decide if you graduate

• Ohio entrusts seasonal N.C. workers with proficiency test scoring

Steven Fox
Guest 'riter

The state of Ohio licenses its teachers and expects them to educate its youngsters. But it does not trust those teachers to determine that Ohio's schoolchildren deserve promotion or graduation. That power is given to part-time and seasonal workers in North Carolina, as revealed in the very disturbing manner by which the state handles the scoring of the proficiency tests.

The battery of tests given to Ohio's students includes a test in writing. This test cannot be scored by machine, so the state hires an agency to handle the grading of it. Articles in *The Plain Dealer* of February 25 and 26, and then an editorial on the 27th, addressed the subject of who grades the tests, what are these people's qualifications, and how little the people running the program in Ohio know about the scoring of these examinations.

It is disturbing to learn that the tests are being graded by people who seem, from the information available, to be of questionable competence to do that job. It is also distressing to learn, as *The Plain Dealer* indicates, that even the highest ranking members of the Senate Education Committee did not know how the tests were being graded. Even the governor, according to his own spokeswoman, "was unaware of who graded the tests."

These are the facts. Ohio pays $1.4 million to Measurement Inc., a Durham, North Carolina company, who in turn hires workers to score these tests, paying them an hourly wage of $8.50 and hoping they will read 30 or 35 essays an hour. Measurement Inc. requires a bachelor's degree, but that degree does not have to be in education or even in English. Graders need no experience in the classroom. Trained by the company, they work at a storefront in a strip mall in Greensboro, North Carolina, reading the essays written by Ohio's ninth and twelfth graders. Because these tests are required for graduation, these people help determine who gets a diploma and who does not.

Scoring standardized essay tests is not the mysterious process some think it to be. I have been a reader in several examination essay programs for a dozen years, among them the AP exam and the SAT in writing. I have also been a test item writer for the ACT and an assistant examiner for the English Language portion of the International Baccalaureate program. I have a lot of experience in reading examination essays.

Unlike the classroom essay, the exam essay receives no comments or markings, and only a score—in the case of the proficiencies, a number from six to one. Once a reader learns what characterizes clearly competent, competent, adequately competent, potentially competent, possibly incompetent, and yes, incompetent writing, assigning a score is not at all a difficult matter. The reader registers an overall response to the use of language, to the structure of the essay, to the extent and effectiveness of the development, to the total effect of the essay, and declares it to be a six, a five, and so on. This is called holistic scoring, and it is the method used in all standardized exam settings that I know of. It is remarkably accurate: given the same training, different readers would assign the same essay the same score almost all of the time. In fact, these essays are read twice. If the scores do not agree, a third reader resolves the "discrepancy." At the SAT we are told occasionally that we have a discrepancy rate of something under 2 percent (I really cannot recall a specific figure). According to the Plain Dealer, Measurement Inc. guarantees an accuracy of 80 percent.

Holistic scoring requires something more than a passing familiarity with good writing. When the Educational Testing Service, who administers the SAT and other writing tests, assembles a team of readers, they hire people who teach writing—high school and college instructors who reflect the demographics of the test takers. Readers represent a mix of genders, ages and races and come from all parts of the country; we teach in large, small, and middle-sized, urban, suburban and rural public, parochial and independent schools. There are always some new readers at each gathering, but the vast majority have been reading examinations for a long, long time. We spend the first few hours of each session and a few minutes after every break in training, which involves refamiliarizing ourselves with the scoring rubric and reading actual student-written essays, assigning scores, and comparing our scores with the scores given by other readers. Essays at the SAT are scored by people who know what they are doing.

The Plain Dealer's characterization of the readers at Management Inc. suggests that they are far less accountable than is ETS. I am not saying that they are disreputable. I imagine that they seek to do their job in the best way they can. The problem is that they do not have the human resources to do that job as it should be done. They do not have the demographic mix nor a background in teaching writing or working with students. Part-time and seasonal workers are unlikely to know much about teenagers and their schools. The conditions they work under and the payment of less than a quarter per student do not make the essays seem like they're worth very much, do they? Even if they have supervisors overseeing the general quality and even if the papers are read twice for consistency of grading, they still don't promise more than 80 percent accuracy. That is not a number to inspire confidence.

State officials say that Ohio teachers cannot score the essays because they have not got the time. That is a poor excuse. In New York State the teachers score the proficiency tests in all fields. Someone can no doubt devise a plan whereby Ohio teachers can be trained in holistic scoring methods and the papers can be distributed around the state for assessment at far less cost and with much more valid results than we are currently getting. And the other benefit to Ohio's students would come from how much more their teachers would know about writing and the teaching of writing because of their experiences as readers. It happened to me and it will happen to them. The quality of instruction would rise, the teachers would be more involved and invested in the state program, the money would be kept in Ohio where it would support Ohio's economy, and everyone involved would be better off.

I hope that our own administrators and Board of Education members, who are respected in Columbus, will express concern over these unacceptable practices and encourage the legislature to explore other, better means of getting this job done. Part time and seasonal employees in North Carolina should not be given the responsibility of determining whether an Ohio youngster receives a high school diploma. The state does not give that power even to teachers with bachelors, masters or doctoral degrees in the particular subjects being examined. Part time workers in North Carolina? We all deserve better.

Rob Rains
Staff reporter

Police cross the line

Whoever came up with the slogan "to serve and protect" probably didn't have drug dealing and covering for corrupt police officers in mind. Lately it seems that the police are just as bad as the seedy characters they are supposed to arrest. I am not referring to the mildly corrupt sheriff who harasses the boys in the *Dukes of Hazard*. I am talking about boys in blue so dangerous they could only come out of a Hollywood movie.

New York and Los Angeles are in the hot seat right now for their officers' blatant disregard for laws. Recently, former officer Charles Schwarz, along with officers Thomas Wiese and Thomas Bruder, were convicted of using unnecessary force when dealing with a suspect. The three officers beat and sodomized the man in the precinct bathroom.

The problem is twofold: the "blue wall of silence," and government officials breathing down law enforcement's backs. The "blue wall of silence" is an unwritten rule among most police officers to protect each other. It means lying under oath, hiding or placing evidence if need be. Also, government officials pressure police departments to make quotas for arrests and busts. Police are encouraged to frisk first and ask questions later. According to the *Village Voice*, of 45,000 men, mostly African-Americans and Latinos, pulled aside and frisked on the street last year in New York City, only 9,000 were arrested.

Recently, an abominable verdict resulted in the acquittal of four white New York City officers in the shooting of Amadou Diallo. The 24-year-old immigrant was walking out of his apartment late one night when the four undercover officers stopped him. The officers fired 41 bullets at Diallo, striking him 19 times and killing him on the spot.

Apparently, one bullet is no longer enough. It seems Diallo was an indestructible juggernaut. Diallo's weapon of choice was his wallet. What kind of officers shot Diallo? Two of the officers had previously been reprimanded for excessive force, one officer on five occasions.

One in five reports of domestic disputes come from women whose husbands are cops. Because of these mounting examples of unwarranted violence, some people now fear the police as much as they fear gang bangers.

Most police officers are honest men and women who refuse to succumb to the temptations and do indeed serve and protect. Those officers need to puncture the blue wall of silence and speak out against their disreputable peers.

Who wants to marry an idiot?

• *Millionaire* show degrading to people

By Carmel Pryor
Staff reporter

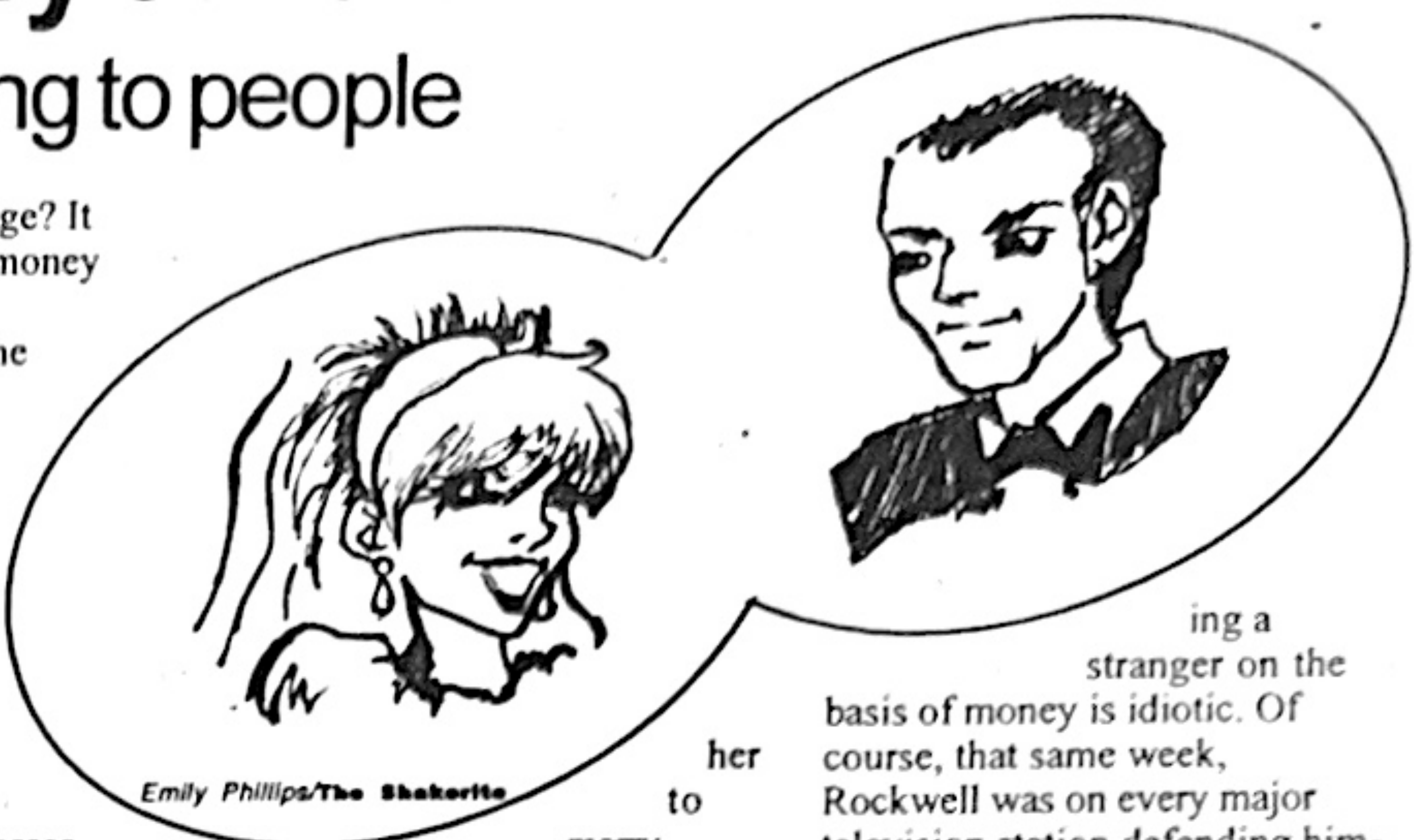
On Feb. 15, Fox network debuted the *Who Wants To Marry a Multimillionaire* game show/ beauty pageant. For those who missed the two-hour melodrama, a brief description of the show: 50 female contestants paraded around stage in bathing suits (excuse me, swim wear) and wedding dresses. They answered questions to help the multimillionaire decide which girl he would choose to marry. The two-hour program was taped without the contenders ever seeing the man until the legal wedding ceremony at the closing of the show.

This disheartening and ludicrous display represents the height of the perversion of America's values and thirst for entertainment. Fox gave Americans two hours of females hoping to marry a man for his money as if his identity was defined by $1,000 dollar bills.

The scam made a mockery of marriage, just like any other Jerry Springer-like show or tabloid TV crock that glorifies the stupidity that lurks within this society. But unlike the jokes and laughs that emerge from *Jerry Springer*, Fox's *Who Wants to Marry a Millionaire?* was a disgrace without the benefit of laughs.

The contestants were analyzed by a previously unknown wealthy man, Rick Rockwell, and his family, who helped him determine which woman would make a perfect bride. What about the romantic ideal of finding the right partner? Does a fat wallet guarantee a successful marriage? It may pay the bills, but money can't buy love. Americans hold dear the stereotype of worthless female "gold-diggers," who ruthlessly pursue men for their money. But *Millionaire* proved that well-educated, successful women also equate marriage with blank checks. Sure, most divorces in this country end because of financial problems. No one doubts that money is a critical ingredient in a satisfying relationship. But marriage should be about the bond between two people and their desire to spend the rest of their lives together. How did the women on auction block show ever foresee a future with a man they had never even seen?

The show is a warped rendition of the Ken and Barbie fantasy that some girls have when they are young. Ken drives off in a corvette with Barbie in her full white gown (the "winner," Darva Conger, wore a wedding gown to complete the creepy event), and they arrive at their pink and white mansion and live happily ever after. Rather than a fantasy, this seems more like a form of prostitution. Just as a prostitute walks down the street waiting for a man with money to pick her for a night, these females walked across the stage, each hoping that the man with a couple of millions would pick her to marry.


Emily Phillips/The Shakerite

This horrible ceremony could nearly be defined as an arranged marriage. The bachelor's family was there with him, "keeping score" and telling him which girl they liked best. Still, what were they really basing their judgment on? It surely was not the ever-so-intense and mind boggling questions asked. It was all about looks, and it can be assumed that the other 49 contestants who were not chosen would go back to their terribly scorned single lives.

Conger was chosen by her knight in shining dollar bills, Rick Rockwell. She was a Barbie for (literally) a day, receiving a $35,000 ring, truck, honeymoon (actually a first date) and the "perfect" man. It took less than a week to discover that he was flawed. To the world's and Fox network's surprise, Rockwell was in debt and had a restraining order against him for threatening his ex-girlfriend. Obviously, this should be a sign to every American, male and female, that marrying a stranger on the basis of money is idiotic. Of course, that same week, Rockwell was on every major television station defending himself while Conger sought an annulment. How predictable is that?

This isn't about being an angry feminist with a constant complaint about the barrage of events that ridicule women. These women were exercising their freedom of choice. No one forced them to go on the program and subject themselves to utter embarrassment, they chose to do so. However, the issue is about values, not only women's rights. Sure, there are those that say that if one doesn't like what he sees, he could simply turn the channel, but it takes more than clicking the remote from Fox to ABC. A millionaire and 50 women still agreed to this disgraceful appearance on national television.

Two complete strangers we married in "holy" matrimony; a woman was competing for an unknown multimillionaire bachelor who in turn was looking for a beautiful bride. Whether male or female, anyone could agree that this show should have been called 'Who Wants to Be an Idiot.'

Tragedy sparks talk of gun control legislation

• Six-year-old Kayla Rolland's death exemplifies need for legal reform

By Debra Kamin
Staff reporter

We thought Columbine was the last straw in school violence, but it seems that the camel's back just won't break. Now children who are too young to even comprehend the meaning of the word "murder" are taking guns to school and, with a flash of metal and an ear-shattering pop, twisting the carefully organized world of alphabet songs and arithmetic into another crime scene.

What does it all mean?

In the aftermath of a tragic shooting in which both the victim and killer were just 6 years old, Americans are following the all-too-familiar-path of wondering what is happening to kids and looking to Washington for answers concerning gun violence.

As the headlines and news programs inevitably turn to new stories, the lingering question about the death of Kayla Rolland is not *why* did a 6-year-old boy kill her, but *how* did he get away with it?

We know the boy's father is in jail, and that the boy was living in a crack house where weapons were in easy reach. His uncle has been charged with involuntary manslaughter for leaving the gun in easy reach, but as of now the boy's heaviest institutional punishment will be an 80-day suspension from the first grade.

We can't transfer the blame to his 19-year-old guardian and consider the case closed.

At long last, Americans must do more than mourn the victim and comment on the tragedy of the event. When we see a child who has just learned to tie his shoes subsequently discover how to fire a gun, we must recognize a desperate need for legal reform.

One look at the facts is enough to stun anyone. In one year, firearms killed no children in Japan, 19 in Great Britain, 57 in Germany, 109 in France, 153 in Canada and 5,285 in the United States. Men, women and children in the U.S. *are seeing weapons, hearing about weapons, getting weapons and using weapons. And the children keep dying.*

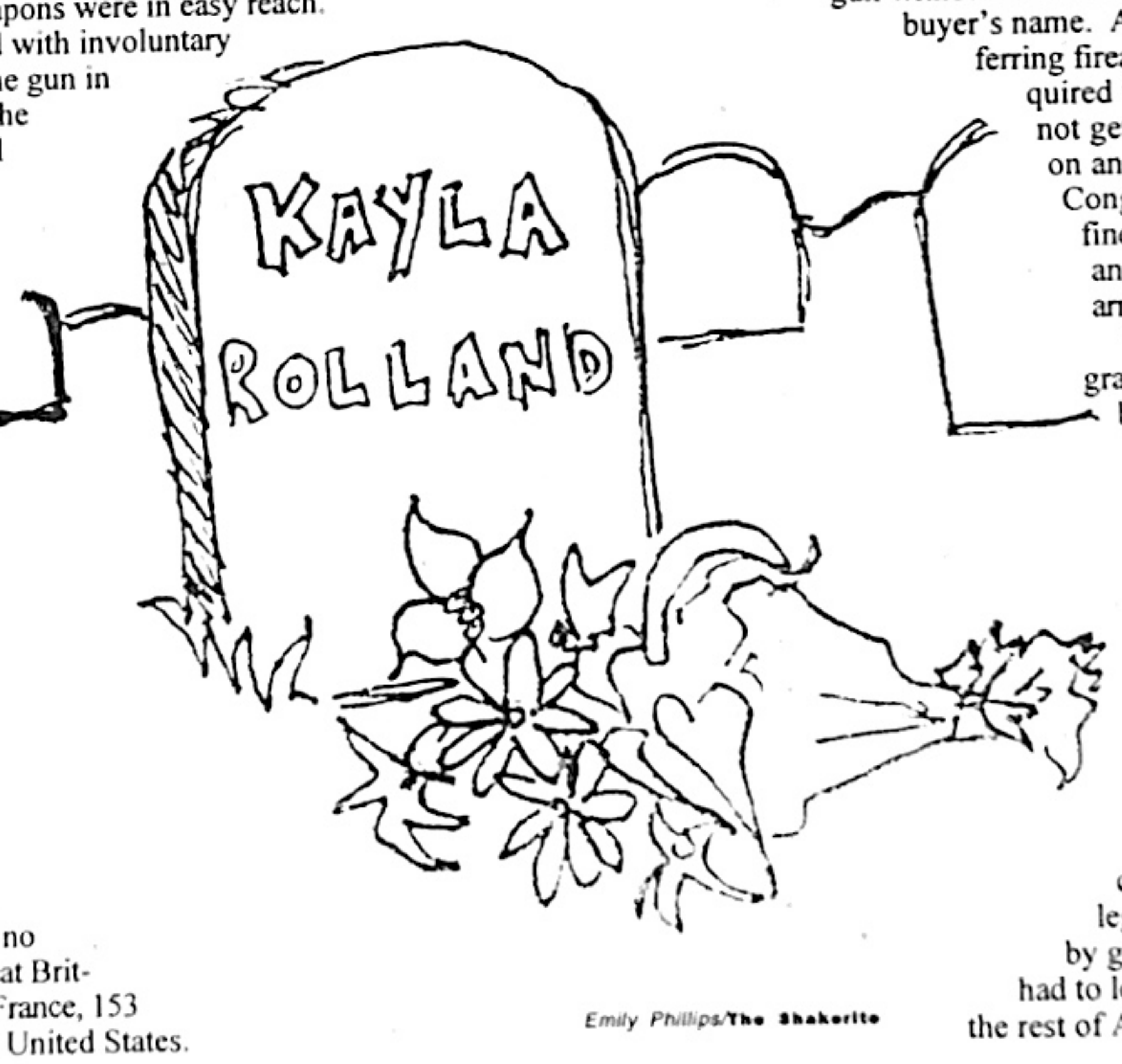
At age six, the child who murdered Rolland is too young to have his name released to the public or to comprehend the ramifications of his actions. This is not a crime that can be chalked up to the destruction of society or the tainting of America's youth, nor can we surmise that innocence is an ancient concept or that people are inherently evil. There is nothing we can do as Americans now but look for a solution.

It is time to take more action than installing metal detectors in the entrances of school buildings. If adolescents and those even younger must be stopped at the classroom door, then they have already found a way to get their hands on a weapon. The school building is too late. Children should not ever have the opportunity to touch a rifle.

Every gun law that has been passed in this country has a loophole. Background checks are required on anyone purchasing a gun, yet at private gun shows an exchange of money results in a handgun without so much as a computer scan of the buyer's name. Adults are prohibited from transferring firearms to juveniles, but are not required to store guns so that kids cannot get access to them. The list goes on and on. With each step taken by Congress, groups such as the NRA find a way to skirt the regulations, and Americans are still being armed.

"When first-graders shoot first-graders, it's time for Congress to be guided by their hearts, not by fear or pressure tactics of the NRA," President Clinton said in response to the Flint killing. The handgun violence epidemic has caused ten times more deaths than the polio epidemic in the first half of the twentieth century. We must realize that an amendment drawn up in 1776 is not the end-all of negotiations.

Either our priorities as Americans will change concerning gun legislation, or we will self-destruct by gunfire. A community in Michigan had to learn the hard way. It's time for the rest of America to catch on as well.



Emily Phillips/The Shakerite

ITS A BIRD, ITS A PLANE, ITS A SUPERHERO!

Comics soar through the century

Reading comics has been a favorite American pastime since the turn of the century, but are they as popular now as they were back then?

By Lia Silver
Centerpiece co-editor

For the past two generations, children have grown up alongside flying men with super powers and gangs of kids called Peanuts who aim to teach the simple lessons of life. Yet comics weren't always as popular as they are today.

The idea of a "comic strip" didn't come around until 1895, when Richard Felton Outcault invented "The Yellow Kid." The strip was about a mute street urchin, who wore only a yellow gown with phrases written on it. Many people fell in love with the silly little character, and the comic's popularity influenced the huge success of cartoons in American culture.

Before the early 1930s, comics consisted mainly of realistic characters. But before long, the superhero came along. The first known superhero was invented by *Joe Shuster and Jerome Siegel, both from Cleveland. These two* young men changed the history of comics strips by creating the legendary Superman.

At first, no one took Shuster and Siegel's idea of a flying man with supernatural powers seriously. But their big break eventually came in 1938 when Sheldon Mayor took a huge risk and put Superman on the first cover of his new magazine, *Action Comics*.

After taking the first big step, the world of action packed comic strips soared. In 1962, yet another legendary super hero came along. Spiderman featured a nerdy high school student named Peter Parker. After Peter was bitten by a radioactive spider, he was given the power to spin webs that enabled him to swing from building to building.

So why have superheroes remained popular for so long?

"People want to be like [super heroes]," junior Alissa Harvey said.

Junior Cyrus Gannaway likes them because of their willpower and strength. "Superman is my favorite super hero. He is tight. He would get the crap kicked out of him, but still come back," Gannaway said.

For many Shaker students, however,these days of fantasy are over.

"I used to read *X-men* and copy the drawings," senior Tara Davis said. "But I don't read comics anymore."

Sophomore Alice Tusselwould rather be planted in reality than in the land of make-believe.

"You can't really get into comics anymore, because you can't relate to them," Tussel said.

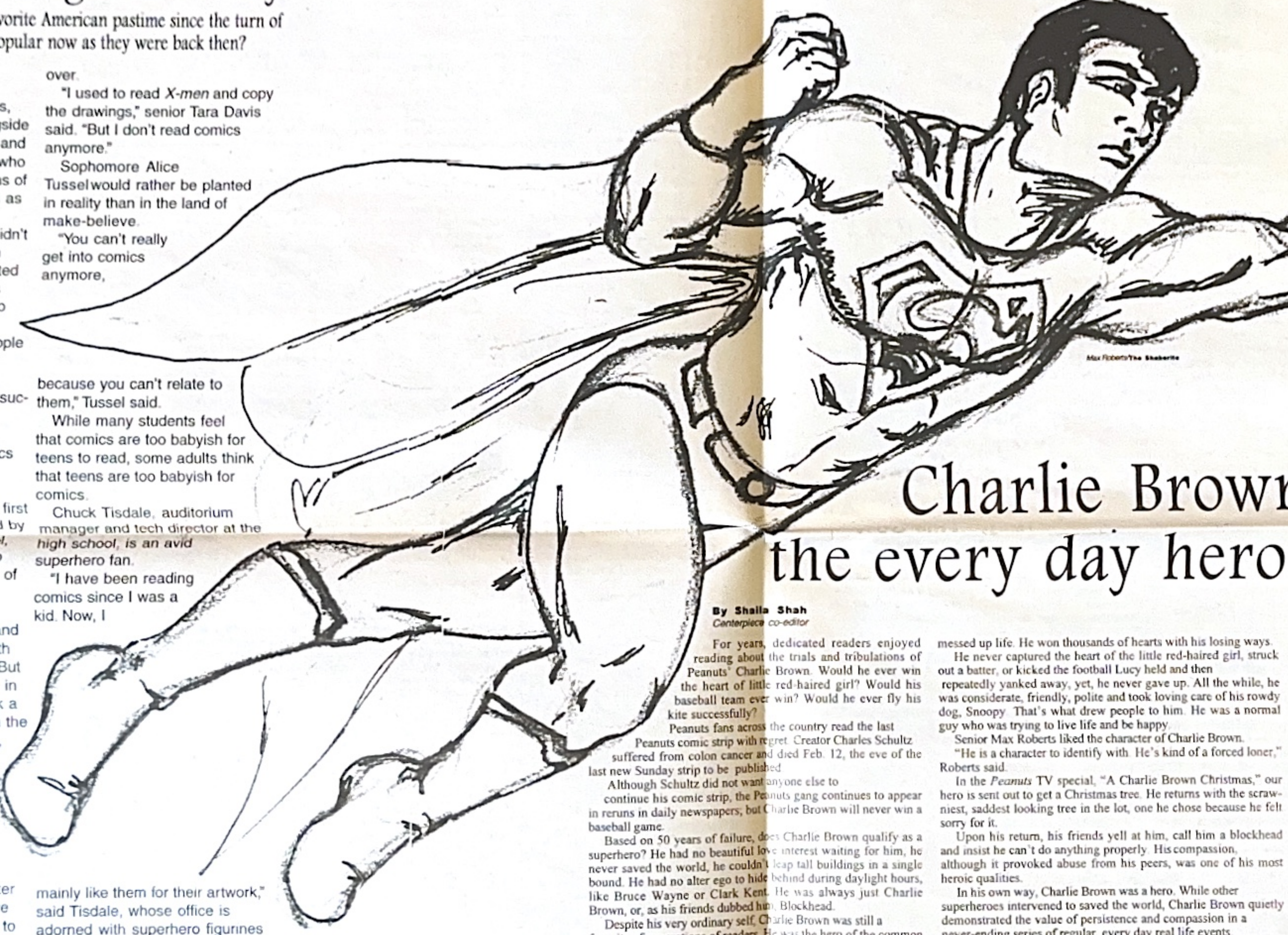
While many students feel that comics are too babyish for teens to read, some adults think that teens are too babyish for comics.

Chuck Tisdale, auditorium manager and tech director at the *high school, is an avid* superhero fan.

"I have been reading comics since I was a kid. Now, I mainly like them for their artwork," said Tisdale, whose office is adorned with superhero figurines and from comic books. "Comics have become much more sophisticated—some don't even have superheroes in them anymore. It seems that they appeal a lot more to people my age."

Whether teenagers are too mature or not mature enough to read comic strips, most feel that they can find better things to do.

"I feel comics are just kid stuff. I'm more into sports and females," junior Jason Wright said.



Max Roberts/The Shakerite

Charlie Brown, the every day hero

By Shaila Shah
Centerpiece co-editor

For years, dedicated readers enjoyed reading about the trials and tribulations of Peanuts' Charlie Brown. Would he ever win the heart of little red-haired girl? Would his baseball team ever win? Would he ever fly his kite successfully?

Peanuts fans across the country read the last Peanuts comic strip with regret. Creator Charles Schultz suffered from colon cancer and died Feb. 12, the eve of the last new Sunday strip to be published.

Although Schultz did not want anyone else to continue his comic strip, the Peanuts gang continues to appear in reruns in daily newspapers; but Charlie Brown will never win a baseball game.

Based on 50 years of failure, does Charlie Brown qualify as a superhero? He had no beautiful love interest waiting for him, he never saved the world, he couldn't leap tall buildings in a single bound. He had no alter ego to hide behind during daylight hours, like Bruce Wayne or Clark Kent. He was always just Charlie Brown, or, as his friends dubbed him, Blockhead.

Despite his very ordinary self, Charlie Brown was still a favorite of generations of readers. He was the hero of the common folk, one we could relate to.

Dressed in his yellow and black zigzag shirt, hands in his pocket and head down, Charlie Brown could be seen shuffling to Lucy's psychiatry booth in search of help to straighten out his messed up life. He won thousands of hearts with his losing ways.

He never captured the heart of the little red-haired girl, struck out a batter, or kicked the football Lucy held and then repeatedly yanked away, yet, he never gave up. All the while, he was considerate, friendly, polite and took loving care of his rowdy dog, Snoopy. That's what drew people to him. He was a normal guy who was trying to live life and be happy.

Senior Max Roberts liked the character of Charlie Brown.

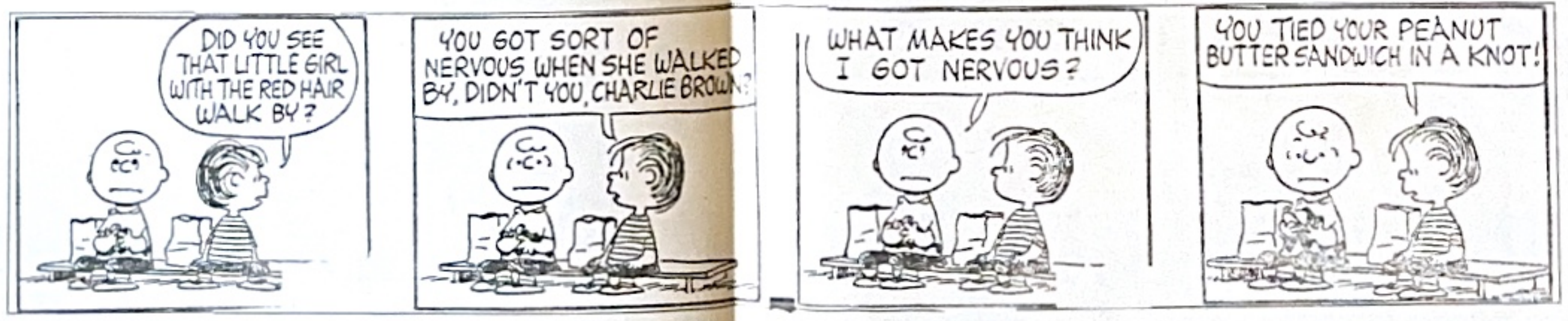
"He is a character to identify with. He's kind of a forced loner," Roberts said.

In the *Peanuts* TV special, "A Charlie Brown Christmas," our hero is sent out to get a Christmas tree. He returns with the scrawniest, saddest looking tree in the lot, one he chose because he felt sorry for it.

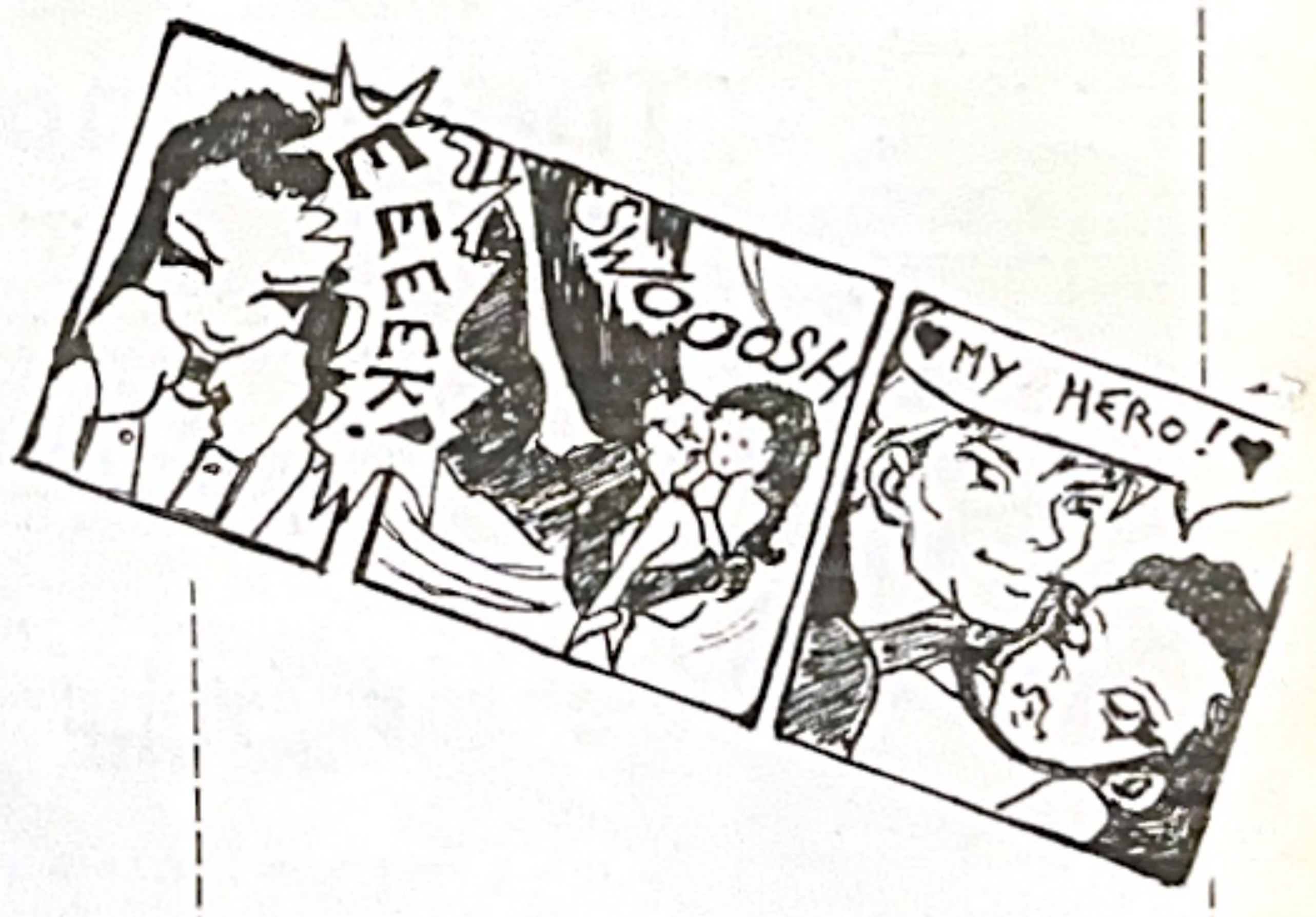
Upon his return, his friends yell at him, call him a blockhead and insist he can't do anything properly. His compassion, although it provoked abuse from his peers, was one of his most heroic qualities.

In his own way, Charlie Brown was a hero. While other superheroes intervened to saved the world, Charlie Brown quietly demonstrated the value of persistence and compassion in a never-ending series of regular, every day real life events.

"I used to read it. It was pretty good. I started because it was a classic thing. Everyone knew about Charlie Brown. Charles Schultz knew what he was doing. Even though he was old, he still knew things that relate to kids." Roberts said.


DID YOU SEE THAT LITTLE GIRL WITH THE RED HAIR WALK BY?
YOU GOT SORT OF NERVOUS WHEN SHE WALKED BY, DIDN'T YOU, CHARLIE BROWN?
WHAT MAKES YOU THINK I GOT NERVOUS?
YOU TIED YOUR PEANUT BUTTER SANDWICH IN A KNOT!

Senior student artist, Emily Phillips, drew an action packed comic strip for Centerpiece. Phillips' strip features a superhero demonstrating the classic *"superhero saves the girl" scenario.*



Jesse Griffiths
Feature co-editor

Goo gah blap, blap!

My high school career is quickly drawing to a close. Yeee doggy am I excited!

However, one would think that after four years of this place, sitting in class after class of boredom, one would learn a lot. I'm not trying to claim that I haven't learned anything. I have. But despite all the homework I have (or haven't) done, I feel myself getting dumber every day.

Honestly people, it's true. Four years ago when I entered this building for the first time, my vocabulary was vast. I was a regular word dork. There was nothing that I loved more than a new word. Oh, those were the days.

But now, I find myself communicating with my friends and family with an intricate system of grunts, moans and gestures. Previously, when I needed an object just out of reach, I would say something to the effect of "Could you please pass me the ____?" Nowadays, it goes something like, "Ugh!" accompanied by pointing at the desired object.

This change of events brought slight problems. If I happen to come into contact with one who doesn't speak my clever language, I got nothing but dirty looks.

I can't even imagine the hell that awaits me when I head off to college in the fall. I can imagine the look on my professors' faces when I show up and say "UGGG GOO EREA!!!" (translation: Hi, I'm Jesse. Nice to meet you). That'll go over really well.

These strangers may look upon me as an everyday moron. I can't blame them; I barely speak English. What appears to be a simple failure to think is really a complex system of carefully timed and tuned sounds that combine to create a language that only close friends understand.

Through the use of this secret agent repertoire of words, my fellow spies and I are able to exchange confidential information without passerbys stealing our secrets.

Often we get looks, weird crazy-like looks. At first, this disturbed me. I spent sleepless nights wondering why no one understood me. However, I somehow found the path to enlightenment: I am not the crazy one, they are. This systematic language practiced by my friends and I is truly a sign of extreme intelligence.

Understanding something like "GAH!" proves you have a special intelligence undiscovered by others around you. If "Gah" rings a bell in your mind, please, come see me. You may have what it takes to be a special agent (but you must pass a verbal test first!)

No two music stores are alike. . .

Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

Record Revolution on Coventry in Cleveland Heights is one of today's hard-to-find old fashioned record and CD stores. Not only do they have new CDs, records and tapes, but they also have used CDs for any thrifty spender to peruse.

. . . which one is right for you?

By Nate Auerbach
Feature co-editor

I remember when I was young, if I wanted to get a new CD I would have to go out and buy it. It's amazing how primitive our lifestyle used to be.

Now we have access to any album and any song in any version through our computers. Forget Jesusdance.com; kids have locked their windows and barred their doors. They spend hours downloading music from the hot Napster.com.

Dare I say, it's *en fuego*.

But there are still a few people like me whose computers can barely keep up with a game of solitaire and whose parents cannot afford a CD burner. Call me old fashioned, but I still venture to record stores.

Which ones? Good question. I can easily eliminate shopping mall stores like Record Town and others that sell only new products. CDs should not cost $16.99. That's as nuts as a box of Planters.

Best Buy superstore is the best place to buy new CDs, but it is much more cost efficient and more fun to shop for used CDs.

The newly renamed CD Game Exchange on Coventry can also be found at our own Van Aken Center. This store has a great selection and it is always a pleasure to find great buys such as Another Bad Creation in the 50 cent section.

"Price is a factor," senior Craig Ozan said. "You can get used ones and they're cheaper and they play just as well. It's very convenient."

I do have one complaint, though. Customers often spend more time waiting around for someone to open a case for them than they do actually shopping.

Record Revolution on Coventry, is the worst place to go unless you are actually looking for records. Their used CD section is as organized as Russia's government. And, it doesn't have anything good.

There is one place that is better: CD Warehouse. This store has a good selection, fair deals and fun contests. It also has a lot of cool, rare posters.

Each day there are two challenging but possible contests in which you can win a dollar off a used CD. They also have a frequent shopper's card which allows you to receive a free used CD after you purchase 10.

You can listen to CDs at the Warehouse before you purchase them, and the employees will professionally clean your used CD for you when you buy it.

"The people who work there are really cool," sophomore Lindsay Kocab said.

CD Warehouse often has parties and promos for new releases.

"They give away a lot of cool stuff," Kocab said.

CD Warehouse always has a wide variety of used and new CDs.

The used ones are reasonably priced, while the new ones are still cheaper than those found at the yuppie stores.

But what about those unheard of stores floating around?

"There's this place on Harvard called Crazy Dee's Music Store," senior Nakesha Pickett said. "Rappers who haven't gotten out yet will give [Crazy Dee] demos and he'll promote them."

Crazy Dee treats his frequent customers like royalty and gives them discounts. Also, CDs cost no more than $12.

"He has used CDs too," Pickett said. "They're cheap and are good quality."

CD shopping is an adventure. Unglue your schnoz from the computer screen and quit downloading and burning your music. Half the greatness of your CD is the place from which you got it.

There is no sub for Torrence

By Jes Burns
Staff reporter

What teacher at Shaker grew up in New Jersey, aspired to be a fireman, and sang for his wife at his wedding? Here's a hint: he teaches global studies and sociology, in addition to coaching the JV women's lacrosse team. If you guessed Buddy Longo, you're wrong. If you guessed Bob Wonson, you're wrong. If you guessed Todd Torrence, you're correct.

So just what makes Torrence, who previously worked at a sub shop and a gas station, worthy of being featured in *The Shakerite*?

teacher
FEATURE

"He is a very energetic teacher," freshman Rachael Wasserman said.

Freshman Katie Porter agrees. "I definitely think he's a good teacher. He dedicates himself to the students."

Torrence didn't always know he would become a teacher. He had hoped to be a fireman, but his experience in the army changed his mind. He was in the service for four years, stationed in Germany and Colorado.

"I started coaching soccer in the army, and I began to think maybe teaching was what I wanted to do," he said.

As a teacher, Torrence is well-liked by students as well as faculty.

"He's young, dynamic, and seems to really relate exceptionally well to kids," said social studies teacher Cameron Buckland. "We need a lot more young faculty like him, especially in our department. Many are near retirement. Our energy level is not as high as it is in young lions like him."

Torrence enjoys teaching immensely. "The part I like best is when kids feel empowered when they learn," he said. "I realize not everyone enjoys school, so I try to make them realize it has its benefits. Because you have to enjoy what you do, or else there is no point in doing it."

Besides being a devoted teacher, Torrence is happily married with two children. "Right now my children are my hobbies," he said.

However, Torrence hasn't always been so exemplary. As a student, he and his friends used to pass time torturing their French teacher. He recounted one of these tales of terror to *The Shakerite*: "There were curtains in our French room, and when my French teacher left the room to answer a phone call, one of my friends put his shoes under the curtain, sticking out. Then he left the room. When the teacher returned she realized someone was missing, and she saw his shoes under the curtain, so she started yelling at the curtain, thinking he was behind it. She went over and pulled it away, and we all just laughed because no one was there," he said.

Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

Todd Torrence helps a student calculate his grade. Students who study sociology with Torrence learn about trends in human behavior

Even nowadays he slips up (or down) every once and awhile.

"I taught class with my fly down once," he said. "A student tried to tell me subtly, but of course I didn't pick up on it, so he just yelled it out."

Despite the occasional uncomfortable moments, Torrence is still widely respected.

"He's a teacher you can relate to, and you can talk to," freshman Lyndon Brooks said. "He's just an all-around cool guy."

Students are driven by the SUV

6 OF US
OHIO
CUYAHOGA

Mary O'Connell/**The Shakerite**

With the price of gas increasing almost daily, owners of SUVs are paying the price for those huge monsters mistaken for automobiles. To fill them up, you pump gas for hours, and then, the next day, you're back again.

By Rob Rains
Staff reporter

Be careful before you get behind the wheel of a sport utility vehicle; you might end up regretting the experience.

According to recent crash tests, sport utility vehicles (SUVs) are more likely to tip over and crash than smaller cars. Consumers Union, publisher of *Consumer Reports* magazine, along with the Center for Auto Safety and the Safety First Coalition, first reported serious rollover concerns with a small SUV model, the Suzuki Samurai, in 1988.

Emily Phillips/**The Shakerite**

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, the government agency studying the safety of SUVs, describes two characteristics of SUVs and other trucks that have the potential to increase fatalities: rollover propensity and crash compatibility.

Picture this: you're on your way to school and you have to stop at a red light. A bus from the right slowly rumbles past. It takes forever, and you are left wondering when Toyota came out with buses.

It turns out that this was not a school bus but a behemoth nonetheless. That's right, it was that energy efficient anti-Christ, the sport utility vehicle.

The average SUV only gets 15 to 17 miles to the gallon. With rising oil and gas prices, people may want to think twice before getting behind the wheel of one of these monsters.

Auto makers are competing to see who can make the largest vehicle that can swallow the most gasoline.

The latest weapon in Ford's arsenal, The Excursion, stands at six and a half feet wide and a whopping 8500 pounds, reducing the chances of playing chicken with a Volkswagon Beetle to almost zero.

SUVs don't have the same crash test requirements as cars. As a result they are not required to have safety features like airbags, side impact beams, and impact absorbing bumpers.

This makes collisions even with smaller cars more destructive and deadly.

Of course it's always fun to drive behind a sport utility vehicle. The first problem is that, if you drive a car remotely normal size, you cannot see in front of the beast ahead of you.

The headlights for a moderately sized sport utility vehicle are as much as 39 inches above the ground, blaring in the mirrors of smaller cars in front of them.

In 1978, in order to curb pollution and encourage cars to be more environmentally friendly, the government passed a "gas-guzzler" tax.

The tax charged a fee to cars that used up more gasoline and didn't charge anything to cars that had higher mileage.

Surprisingly, sport utility vehicles are also exempted from this tax, allowing car manufacturers to continue to pollute our breathing air with their steroid-enhanced monsters on wheels.

With smaller cars that can get up to 40 miles to the gallon on the highway, the SUV's gas mileage is horrendaus and embarrassing.

Some people may use the argument that the SUV is a well built machine, thus justifying the high prices.

But according to Suv.com, a web site devoted to the SUV consumer culture, most SUV models turn a profit of around twelve thousand dollars.

According to SUV.org, another anti-SUV website, "Federal information shows that, although light trucks account for one-third of all registered vehicles, traffic crashes between a light truck and any other vehicle now account for the majority of fatalities in vehicle-to-vehicle collisions.

"Of the 5,259 fatalities caused when light trucks struck cars in 1996, 81 percent of the fatally injured were occupants of the car.

In multiple-vehicle crashes, the occupants of the car are four times more likely to be killed than the occupants of the SUV.

"In a side-impact collision with an SUV, car occupants are 27 times more likely to die."

Recent results from the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, an organization researching for the insurance industry, the safety of passengers in SUVs for insurance companies, revealed some of the dangers of driving a sport utility vehicle.

The ratings measured from good to marginal to poor and, surprise, none of the cars faired too well.

Only five were given an "acceptable" rating, while eight received either "marginal" or "poor."

Spring break? More like spring break down

By Jess Strange
Staff reporter

Shaker students are in dire need of SPRING BREAK. Check out these answers we got after reviewing previous issues of *The Shakerite*.

Q: What goes into making spring break a wonderful experience?
A: Sleep, sleep and more sleep! Some friends and lots of food too.
Q: What was your best spring break experience?
A: I think it's an excellent curriculum. It follows state guidelines.
Q: What was your worst spring break experience?
A: Umm I forgot. I think the answer is B.
Q: What are your plans for spring break?
A: Very powerful and passionate appeal.
Q: So which came first, the spring or the break?
A: Probably the spring. I bet brakes have springs.
Q: If you aren't travelling, what are your plans?
A: I'm going to try my hardest to just not think. It hurts my head, you know?
Q: Can you offer suggestions for the stinkers who have to stay home for spring break?
A: My mom orders it by the boxfull, so I just grab a bottle on my way out.
Q: What would you do with a spork, a potato, a tricycle and a half-used roll of toilet paper to amuse yourself if you were home bored?
A: Oh that's easy. Go find a date-preferably someone little who can fit with you on a tricycle. Then pretend you just got married. You don't really need a dress, I mean it's up to you. Tie the potato to the back of your tricycle (like a can), make the spork a crown, adding any jewels and string you may find necessary, and make a sign of the roll, excuse me, the half-used roll, of toilet paper which says 'just married'.
Q: Does my butt make these pants look big?
A: I plead the fifth
Q: Yes or No?
A: Asking for dates is difficult, for many people's feelings get hurt. You better be careful I know what you're up to.
Q: What do you want to eat or chew over break?
A: That's a hard one. I plan on eating soup, lots of soup, with chunks. And I would enjoy to chew on my cud.
Q: When I say the word spring, what do you think of?
A: I prefer being outside because it gives you a chance to be at one with nature, a chance to relax in the sun. That is why humans have two hands.
Q: If you could be a vacation which one would you be?
A: I would be a vacation to Saudi Arabia, where the orangutans live.
Q: Why don't people go spring break carroling?
A: It's easier to pattern your life after someone you love instead of someone you don't know.

Dan Moody/**The Shakerite**

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Read
Read
READ

Meghan Dubyak
News co-editor

Say 'Bye Bye Bye' to much of today's pop music

On March 21, millions of screaming prepubescent girls ran to the local record store and wrestled each other for a copy of 'NSync's new album, *No Strings Attached.* As I watched footage on the news, I sat in amazement while each shopper shelled out $16.99 for the CD, and I wondered about the wisdom of their investments. Once 'NSync's hit single is retired from MTV's *TRL* in a few months, I'll bet that *No Strings Attached* will go from most cherished possession to drink coaster for some young 'NSync patrons.

The point: today's music won't last.

Now I'm not coming down on pop music completely. Much of it is enjoyable, for the first several times. (Note: I stress first *several*). But how much of this music is actually going to endure? Right now, the musical test is how long it lasts on *TRL*-type shows.

Does anyone really think that when we're older, we'll pop out our Britney Spears and Backstreet Boys CDs and proudly display them to our bored children? I doubt it. My prediction is that the only time you'll hear "Baby One More Time" is on a TV commercial for *Super Hits of the '90s.*

As I sort through my parents' old records, I see artists such as Bob Dylan and The Beatles -- artists many people still enjoy today. I can't help wonder what our children will pull out as tokens of our generation.

There are several reasons why current music won't last. The first and foremost: today's music just isn't sincere. As I watched the Grammy awards, I noticed that most of the "artists" nominated didn't even write their own music. I'm not saying that belting out a song while simultaneously shaking your hips and doing a dance routine isn't a skill, but I really don't think this kind of music will have longevity. For a song to last, it has to be a sincere effort with some lyrical backbone. A catchy tune can easily become tiresome, but powerful words rarely fade.

I'm not saying never listen to pop music again, or burn all the CDs you currently have. I am saying you should find a musical plan B. It's alright if you want to cruise around blaring "Bye Bye Bye," but you should also find some music with good lyrics that will last. After all, you'll be old someday. Do you want to pull out *No Strings Attached* and say, "This was what I listened to when I was your age?"

When Alex Cole speaks, people listen

• Senior finds success in speech and theater

By Lisa Samols
Co-editor in chief

As described by theater teacher Ned Galloway in 1998, senior Alex Cole is a "skinny white guy who sounds like James Earl Jones."

"He told me to make use of that," Cole laughed.

While making use of his voice, Cole has built up his credentials in the theater department to culminate in a senior year that he calls "amazing."

"This is one of the greatest years in my entire life," Cole said. "With the exception of college, everything is really making sense."

Since scoring small parts in mainstage theater productions, Shakescenes and New Stages since freshman year, Cole has put his exceptional talent and his Vadaresque intonation to use in all theater functions he has joined.

In last year's successful musical *The Pirates of Penzance* Cole made his presence known as the bumbling baritone police captain, lighting up the stage with comic antics as he led his troops to victory over a band of pirates. Cole was cast in another leading role in this year's mainstage production, Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Cole played Demitrius, a lovesick Athenian who becomes the victim of a fairy's efforts to fix a love quadrangle among Demitrius and three friends.

While these may have been Cole's most memorable roles in the eyes of his adoring public, Cole says his breakthrough role was in Shakescenes his sophomore year, when he finally got to be a character with a name.

"I had always been 'the tree,' or 'the man in the crowd,'" Cole said.

Cole has also been successful in other endeavors, including short story writing contests and participation on the speech team.

Cole and senior Josh Lavin recently won a regional screenwriting contest run by the Great Lakes Theater Festival.

The winning screenplay was a script that Cole and Lavin wrote and filmed. The eight minute movie is titled *Date Night*, a parody of prime time news shows such as *20/20* and *Dateline*. In the film, Cole and Lavin filmed their friends interviewing characters from Shakespeare's *Richard III*.

a&e
raider of
THE MONTH

The film was judged the best of 10 that were screened at the Cleveland International Film Festival at Tower City March 21-24.

The dynamic duo of Cole and Lavin have also been successful on Shaker's speech team. Competing in the duo interpretation category in which the two talk to each other without facing each other or physically interacting at all, Cole and Lavin have qualified for the national competition in Portland, Oregon, in June.

Cole credits his success in speech in part to his acting experience at Shaker.

"Theater helps a lot," Cole said. "Improv deals with creating your own space and making stuff that's not there, just like in speech."

Cole's track record has not been perfect, however.

"I've had some pretty good screw ups this year," Cole said. "I've actually made more mistakes in speech than in theater."

One memorable mess up occurred during one performance of *Pirates of Penzance*, during which Cole was supposed to jump out of a bush and ambush a troupe of pirates. Instead of flourishing his sword in a dignified demand of unconditional surrender, Cole ended up waving a branch at the Pirate King.

"I've been lucky in comparison to others—no ripped pants, no missed cues," Cole said.

And no lack of moral support, as evidenced by Cole's speech and screenwriting counterpart.

"Alex is probably the most talented male actor in the school right now," Lavin said. "It's a blast working with him on creative stuff."

Mary O'Connell/**The Shakerite**

Senior Alex Cole strikes a dramatic pose as Demitrius during this year's production of Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream.* Performing with him is senior Meryl Scher.

the box OFFICE

Tonight
Ruff Ryders/Cash Money tour
Gund Arena
•
Tonight
Tracy Chapman
Palace Theatre

4/11
Open Mike Coffeehouse II
Main Library Teen Center
•
4/15
Diana Krall (part of Tri-C's JazzFest)
State Theatre

4/15
Filter
Baldwin Wallace
•
4/21
Oasis
E.J. Thomas Hall
•
4/23
Smashing Pumpkins
Kent State University

The Centrum says goodbye; new theater to open soon

By Cassie Heller
Staff reporter

As more and more locally-owned shops and restaurants in and around Shaker Heights give way to national chains, even teenagers are feeling the effects. The Centrum Theater on Coventry Road in Cleveland Heights is no more, and with its demise, another destination for teen social life has disappeared.

The theater closed at the end of January due to arguments about a lease agreement, according to Bob Downey, the city manager for Cleveland Heights. The owner of the building and the theater operator could not agree on the terms for a lease.

The Cinema Bar and Grill, a dinner-and-movie theater, will move into the vacant building this year. The new theater is one of a national chain that owns about 60 theaters in 11 different states. It combines the chance to eat a full meal while watching one of your favorite flicks. The theater's menu will feature burgers, fries and soft drinks, as well as alternatives for the health-conscious. The Cinema Bar and Grill will play movies similar to those screened at the Centrum.

The new company is not planning on expanding the Centrum building, but will renovate some of the theater's interior. The traditional auditorium-style seats will be taken out and replaced with dining tables and chairs, all facing the movie screen. Equipment and a new kitchen will have to be installed as well.

The price will be roughly $3 for the movie, but an additional food purchase must be included.

"It wouldn't work if [people] could come in and see a $3 movie and order only a glass of water," Downey said.

Despite the innovative idea of dinner and a movie, students are upset about losing the popular hangout.

"They're putting in a dinner theater, which could bring commerce, but it won't be as much fun," freshman Emily Pfaff said.

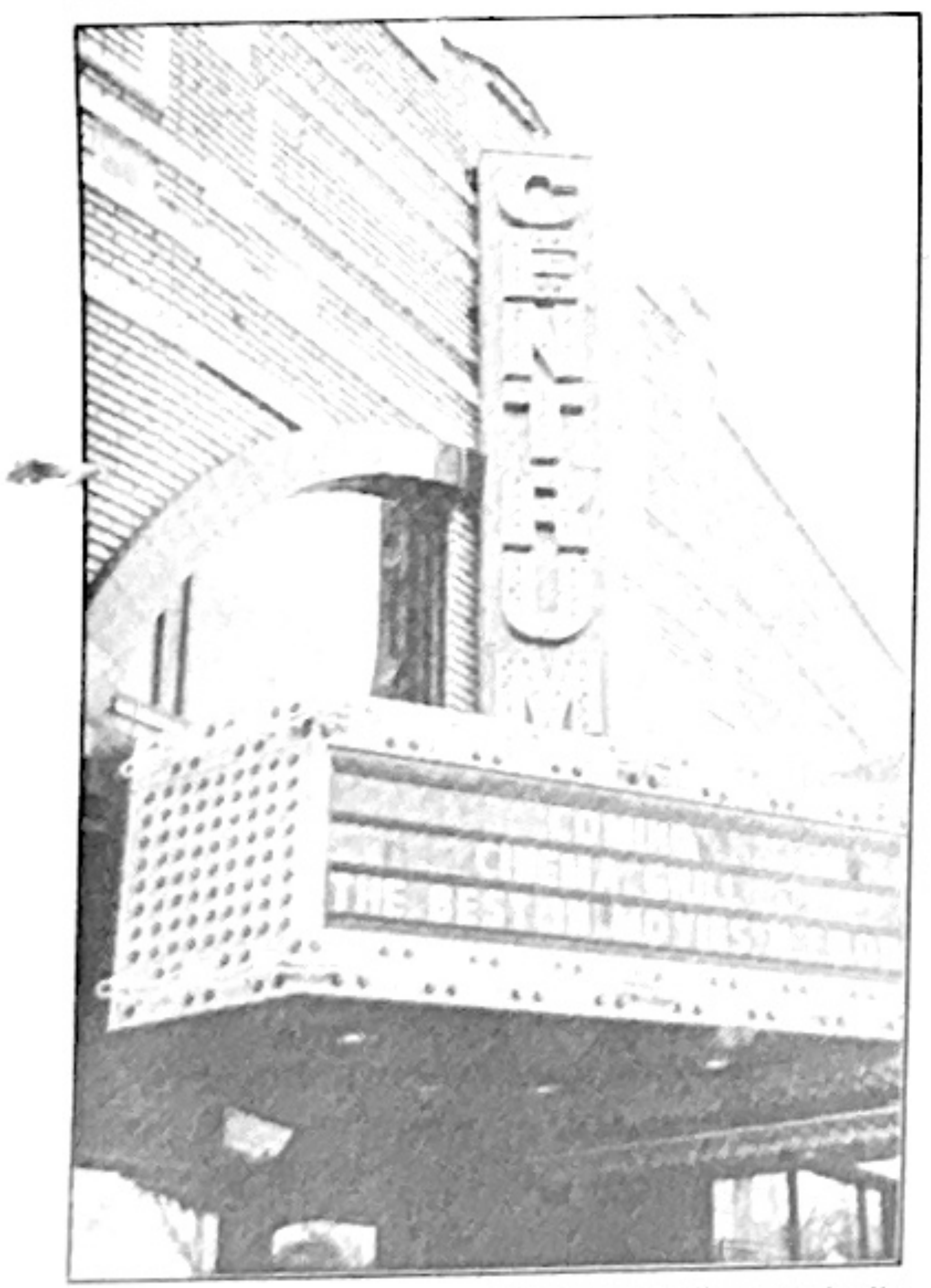
Freshman Grant Meacham will miss the theater. "It played the more mainstream art movies that the Cedar Lee [movie theater] doesn't cover. It will probably affect the community because that genre of movie is harder to find."

Junior Ellen Malone agrees. "I think it's a shame, because it showed so many quirky little films that none of the other theaters ran. Coventry might lose some of its creative flavor," she said.

Downey said the theater closing was not an attempt to clear kids out from Coventry.

"Having kids hang out is part of the attraction of Coventry. The closing was purely a business decision," Downey said.

The theater closing is indicative of a larger, nationwide trend. Many small, independent businesses are being bought or cleared out by large, wealthy companies. Shaker Square is a good example of this trend. The property was bought by developers, and, after renovations in the years to come, the majority of stores at the Square will be chains, such as Borders and The Gap. Several stores and restaurants, such as Hunan on the Square, which has operated there for nine years, cannot afford the expensive leases that the new owners are charging, and will probably close soon.



Mary O'Connell/**The Shakerite**

"I think small businesses should be given the chance to remain," English teacher Carol Van Valkenburg said. The Centrum recently closed.

New Stages, movies fill this month's reviews

• *Erin Brockovich* a crowd-pleaser, *Pitch Black* will make you want to leave the lights on

Movies

Erin Brockovich

Starring: Julia Roberts
Rated: R

The title character of Julia Roberts' newest blockbuster film, *Erin Brockovich*, is a most unlikely protectress of human rights. Physically, Erin is the anti-feminist. She wears spike heels, leather miniskirts, and an array of bust-enhancing, low-cut tank tops. But her lack of inhibition and indomitable personality make her the perfect spokesperson for the suffering California working class.

Erin starts off as a down-on-her-luck (as in flat-broke and unemployed) single mother of three, and basically stays that way for most of the movie. When she gets into a car accident and is awarded no money because of her lawyer's incompetence, she has to search for a way to pay her medical bills, car payment, rent and still provide for her family. Erin ends up returning to her lawyer to demand a job as an apology for his repugnant performance in court. As Erin goes about her minimum-skill filing job, making enemies throughout the office with her trashy attire and witty reparte ("Bite my ass, Krispy Kreme!"), she comes across a seemingly simple real estate case and becomes entangled in its complications. Erin finds that an electric company has, for a long time, been contaminating water in a small town, causing horrible illnesses in the residents, such as chronic nosebleeds and headaches and a staggering variety of cancers. Erin takes up the case and devotes her time, in work and out, to making the company pay for their damages.

The story is fairly conventional, but because it is based on a true story, I guess there was not that much they could do to make a stunningly creative plot. But what the film lacks in story it makes up for in Brockovich's portrayal. Julia Roberts does an impressive job of making Erin's brash, indignant attitude towards just about everything come alive on the screen.

Lisa Samols

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Out of Four

•

Pitch Black

Starring: Vin Diesel, Cole Hauser
Rated: R

Picture a deserted, dry, barren planet with three blazing hot suns and no food or water. In *Pitch Black*, this landscape is trouble enough for the crew of a transport ship that has crash-landed, but when night comes, things get even worse. Shabby pilot Carolyn Fry (Radha Mitchell) is attempting to fly 40 passengers to other worlds, where they plan to settle. A prison guard named Johns (Cole Hauser) opposes many of her decisions and gives her a hard time about everything, especially Riddick (Vin Diesel), the murderous prisoner on board the ship. Once the ship crashes, the remainder of the crew must survive with no resources, a convict on the loose, and aliens who can only be defeated with light. Soon night will come and the flashlights won't last forever . . . This movie is suspenseful and makes you jump out of your seat. It is packed with plenty of good old horror-show gore. However, it does suffer from the flaw of most sci-fi flicks — no character development. Ultimately, *Pitch Black* takes us back to simpler days when we were afraid of the dark. This movie is a heart-pounding thriller for anyone needing a scream.

Cassie Heller

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Out of Four

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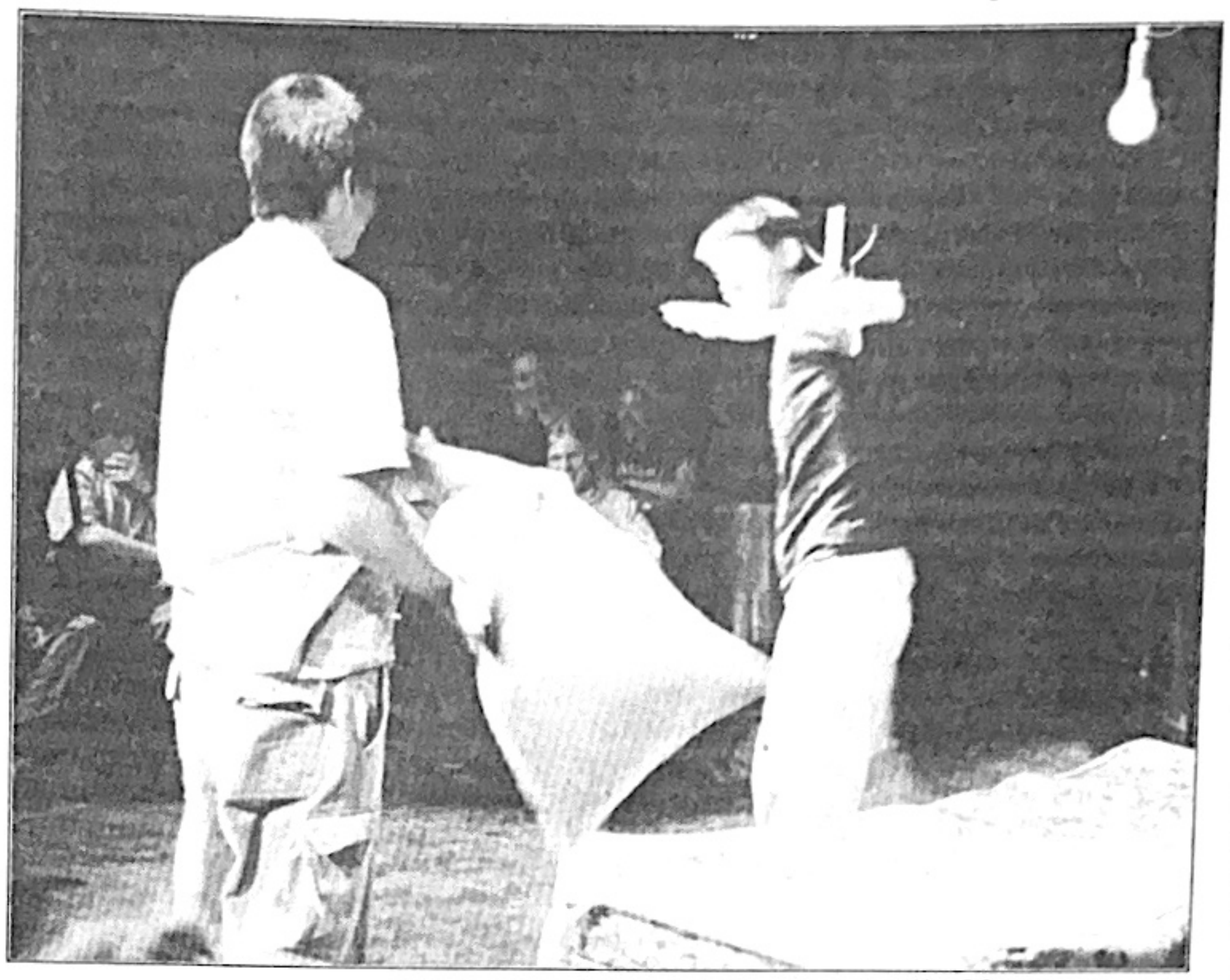
Rear Window

Starring: Jimmy Stewart, Grace Kelly
Rated: PG



Mary O'Connell/ **The Shakerite**

Above: Senior Aaron Dibner-Dunlap and junior Andy Geronimo perform in *Boxes*. It was directed by senior Preston Goforth and written by senior Austin Frank. Right: Junior Nate Stonehill relaxes despite being chained by handcuffs in senior Laura Jacqmin's play, *Throwing Stones*, directed by senior Jeff Rosenberg. New Stages started 17 years ago, and has become a popular part of Shaker theatre. This year, there was a total of six plays, all written, directed by and starring Shaker students.

Imagine this as a plot for a soap opera: in the sweltering summer heat, a photographer is stuck inside his cramped apartment with a badly broken leg. To pass the time, he casually observes his neighbors' lives through his window. Everything is normal, until one night he notices suspicious happenings in the apartment across the way. Convinced of foul play, he, along with his beautiful, marriage-anxious girlfriend and wisecracking nurse, try to solve the mystery before his neighbor gets away with murder.

Sound interesting? If it does, you must see Alfred Hitchcock's 1954 movie, *Rear Window*. The photographer, L.B. Jeffries, is played to perfection by Jimmy Stewart. His girlfriend, Lisa Fremont, is portrayed by Grace Kelly. The real star, however, is Hitchcock. His genius is highlighted by the fact that the entire movie takes place from the viewpoint of the wheelchair-using Jeffries. The audience sees everything through his eyes, making it seem as if we are right there, spying with him. Many of Jeffries' neighbors never speak, yet Hitchcock clearly portrays their emotions so that they appear to be real characters. The suspense in *Rear Window* builds slowly, but the movie does not feel long at all, and the ending will take you to the edge of your seat. Painstakingly restored to its original glory and recently re-released, *Rear Window* is worth every penny.

Megan Kortemeyer

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Out of Four

New Stages XVII

The Protagonist

Written by: Jeff Rosenberg

Lively and entertaining are two words that would perfectly describe *The Protagonist*. Written by Jeff Rosenberg and directed by Judy Carlson, the play was a clever combination of murder mystery and humor. *The Protagonist* starts off as a play within a play, with a badly rhyming protagonist (Matt Ratner) being replaced by a guy named Steve from the pretend audience (Jon Malangoni). Thinking he has put an end to a terrible play, Steve instead finds himself part of the action, playing the character of Aramian. Before Steve can even grasp what's happened to him, his "wife," Barisia (Leslie Layman) is dead, and he's one of the suspects. To prove his innocence, he and his "mistress" Didremia (Carmel Pryor) must find the real killer before it's too late.

The Protagonist felt at times like a live-action *Clue* game. As the play progressed, I felt sure one of the characters would start asking questions like *Could it have been the maid Humptia* (yes, that is her name) *in the pantry with the butter knife?* Or maybe Juberon, the cleaver-wielding butcher in the kitchen, committed the crime. There were many suspects, but when the real murderer was finally discovered, the play did a good job of wrapping up loose ends. It stayed consistently funny throughout, and was a memorable part of New Stages.

Megan Kortemeyer

•

Cold Reality

Written by: Ben Spiro

In Ben Spiro's *Cold Reality*, three people find themselves handcuffed to train tracks with a note saying one person can leave while the other two must stay and, ultimately, face death. It goes without saying that rock, paper, scissors won't solve this dilemma. Instead, the characters must decide for themselves if their lives are really important. With several hallucinatory characters aiding them in their decision, the three learn about themselves in the process.

Rachel Benish, Alex Cole and Julie Smolinski all handled very well their roles as people whose lives are in a precarious position. It was interesting to see the relationships between their roles and their hallucinations. Dern (Cole) sees a clown, who is played for laughs by Nate Shepherd. Syl (Smolinski) sees her domineering mother (Anna Daley), who wants Syl to go to Harvard instead of wasting her life as an actress. The creepiest character, however, is Jack, Mary's (Benish) dead husband. As played by Stephen Courtright, Jack constantly puts down Mary and is physically abusive.

The end of the play is somewhat bittersweet, as the audience knows the right person got to leave, yet still feels sympathy for the two left behind.

Megan Kortemeyer

•

Throwing Stones

Written by: Laura Jacqmin

As *Throwing Stones* came to a close, murmurs were heard throughout the crowd. While some pondered the play's meaning, others struggled to understand exactly what was going on. While it might not have been the easiest play to understand with a quick once-over, it did stir thought among audience members.

Lauren Bauer shone as Lila, using her range to carry the character from a self-centered brat to a lonely young girl pleading for attention. While she spent the first half of the play offstage, Lila's rapidly changing personality was the driving force behind the play.

As a nontraditional view of a developing relationship, *Throwing Stones* is a thought-provoking story. Wallace (Nate Stonehill) and Lila waver between love and hate for each other. While Lila enjoys parties, dresses and attention, Wallace is trapped - physically - in her attic, conflicted by his need for interaction and his desire to escape. The circumstances behind their situation are only divulged bit by bit, and the audience must take every "fact" a character presents with a grain of salt. *Throwing Stones* lasted well beyond its short time frame, invoking thought and discussion.

Beth Dolinsky

•

The Potter

Written by: Debra Kamin

Artists against the rest of the world is one theme I found predominant in Debra Kamin's play, *The Potter*. The whole story unfolds in a doctor's waiting room, where Louis (John Stephens) has come for the first time, supposedly for a checkup. While waiting, he meets several people who can be described as anything but ordinary, all of whom have a love of art in common. Robin (Joanne Nedrud), Atara (Audrey Klein) and Jackson (Lee Ajayi) have all been to this place before, and they warn Louis of the danger that lurks behind the doctor's walls.

The Potter takes an interesting look at what could happen if artists are censored, by something or somebody. While the audience only briefly sees the doctor, we know that he represents something frightening and unknown to the four main characters. It is easy to see to effort put into this play by everybody who worked on it, and John Stephens and Joanne Nedrud bring a special poignancy to their respective roles.

Megan Kortemeyer

•

Boxes

Written by: Austin Frank

Austin Frank combined both humor and depth in his coming-of-age play, *Boxes*, which was directed by Preston Goforth. The play chronicles a day in the life of two young men, Ken (Aaron Dibner-Dunlap) and James (Andy Geronimo). Both boys suffer from insecurities, symbolized by two black boxes on the corner of the stage. Both also long for something — for Ken it is a green sweatshirt and for James a stuffed cat. Through each other, the boys overcome their insecurities about the future and muster up the courage to open the boxes, only to find out the content of the boxes is exactly what they have been longing for. Dibner-Dunlap and Geronimo shine in their prospective characters and establish a believable relationship. The only blemishes to the production were a few staging flaws. The barely visible location of the boxes caused some confusion: we see the actors faces gazing out to the boxes, but wonder what they are looking at. Despite this minor flaw, the strength of the script and acting make *Boxes* truly enjoyable.

Meghan Dubyak

•

Tropism

Written by: Julie Smolinski

In contrast to more somber plays that preceded it, *Tropism* gave audiences an upbeat moral to ponder. Sprinkled with savory bites of humor (most notably personified by Ben Spiro as a narcoleptic uncle-in-law and Jesse Griffiths as a klutzy, ultra-Southern bride-to-be), Julie Smolinski's play told the story of a young man, PT (Brandon Dorsky), who is visited by an ex-girlfriend, Violet (Emily Stear) on the day he is to marry, coincidentally, another girl named Violet (Griffiths). Without giving a direct summary of PT and Violet #1's former relationship, the characters told the audience how the two used to feel about each other, how they broke up and, in PT's case, how they went on with their lives. Within the subtle explanation of the situation are glimpses of the characters' takes on life and love, which constituted the morals of the story. Smolinski successfully tackled the feat of delivering a meaningful message about life without writing a completely obscure plot.

Lisa Samols

Spring sports teams ready for action

• Track, lacrosse, softball , baseball, tennis geared for play

Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

Women's Lacrosse

Coach: Liz Wilson

Captains: Emily Blanton, Jenny Heisler, Joy Nims, Jenna Sickbert

Last year's record: 15-2

First game: April 11 v. WRA

Men's Lacrosse

Coach: Craig Gallagher

Captains: Matt Faulkner, Adam Moore, Ryan Livingston, Dave Kresnye

Last year's record: 3-7

Next game: April 13 @ Hawken

Women's Track

Coach: Henry Woodard

Captains: Dalanda Jackson, Lauren Richard, Kim Harris, Charlotte Jacobs

Next Meet: April 8 @ Medina

Last year's record: 2-4

Men's Track

Coach: Charles Richard

Captains: Monteia Goodwin, Stephen Courtright

Next Meet: April 1 @ Strongsville

Last year's record: 2-4

Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

Baseball

Coach: Bud Longo

Captains: Dan George, Jeremy Moore, Carson Strang, Mike Wilcox

Last year's record: 12-12

Next game: April 12 v. Elyria

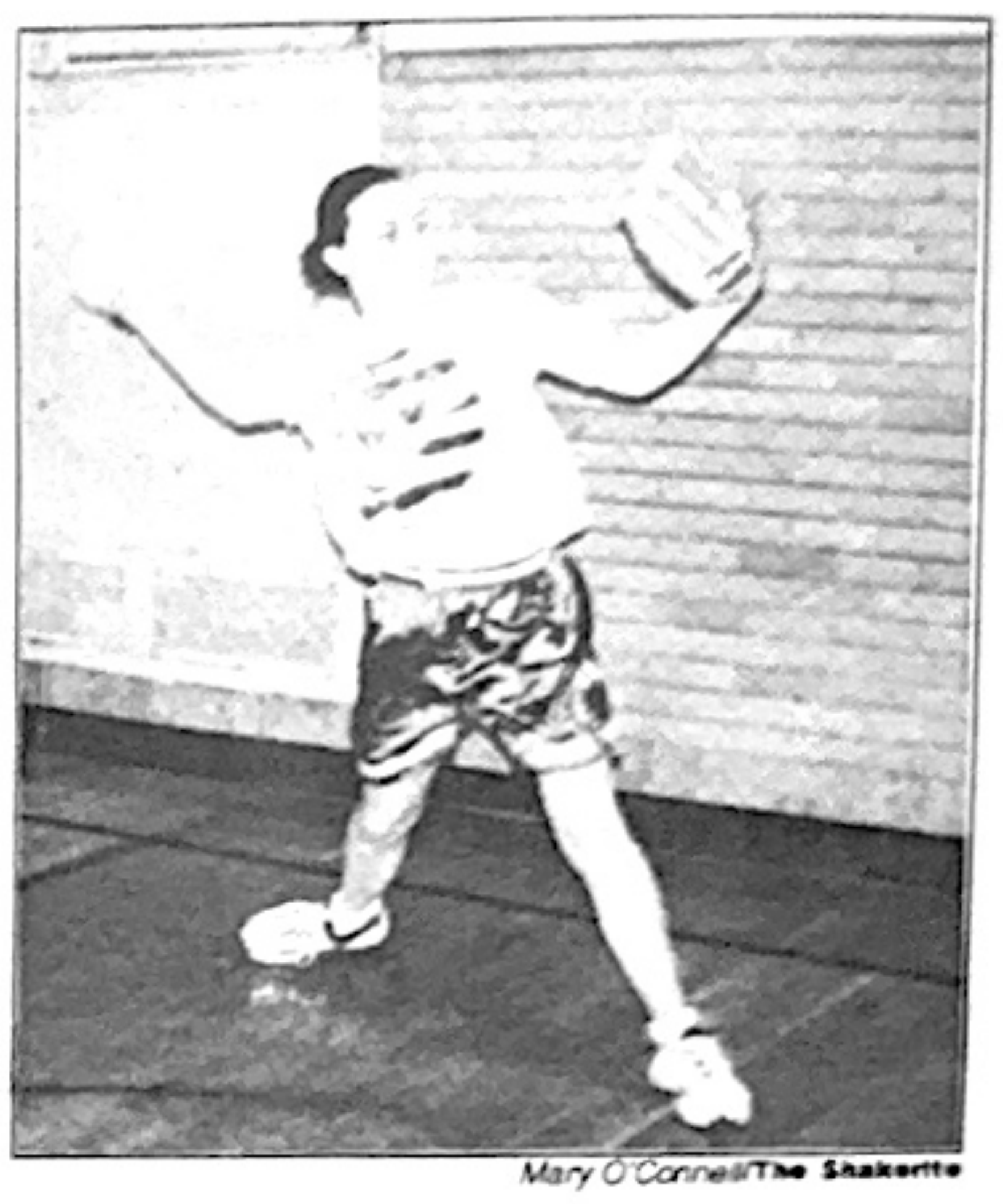
Softball

Coach: Martin Ribar

Captains: Tory Ribar, Camylle Coley

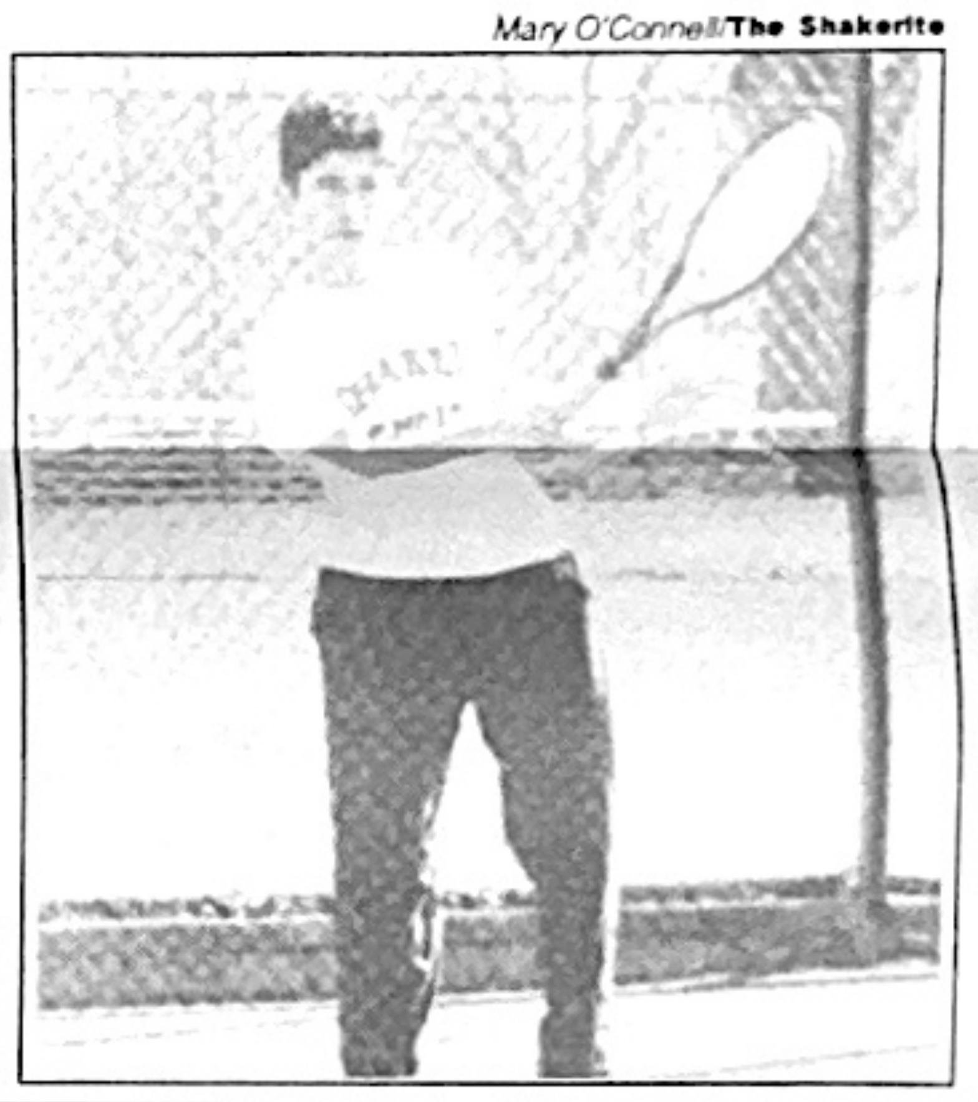
Last year's record: 4-13

First game: April 30 @ Garfield Heights



Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite



Men's Tennis

Coach: *Allan Slawson*

Captains: Amit Ranade, Adam Eklund

Last year's record: 21-2

Next game: April 10 v. Valley Forge

For Jackson, dreams of gold, Nike, giving back to Shaker

• Runner aspires to donate new track to high school, star in Nike commercial after winning gold in Olympics

By Dan George
Staff reporter

While competing in the national indoor track finals in Indiana - a state best known for its high speed NASCAR races - senior sprinter Dalanda Jackson did her best impression of a speeding stock car.

The senior standout blazed the 60 meter hurdles event, placing third in the country and opening the eyes of Olympic and college scouts across the country.

Jackson sat down with *The Shakerite* to talk about her Olympic dreams and season goals.

Q: What are your goals for this season?

A: I want to be number one in the nation this year in the 100 meter hurdles and stay healthy for the whole season. I have to be mentally prepared for every meet if I want to get my times.

Q: Do you have your sights set on shattering any more school or state records?

A: Last year I set the state record in the 100 with a 13.68. If I can get it down to 13.2 I will break my own record. That would be kind of interesting.

Q: What about your future beyond Shaker?

A: I know I'm going to run in college, I just haven't decided where. If I run my 13.2 (in the 100m) I'll get invited to Sacramento for Olympic trials this summer.

Q: Have you thought about inking a deal with Wheaties yet?

A: Oh, I'd love to be endorsed by someone, or have my own spikes or Nike commercials. I don't know about the Wheaties though [laughing]. I do know that if I can make it big I'll give back to my friends and family, and maybe I can help the school build a new track. We really need it.

Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

Senior Dalanda Jackson hopes to attend the Olympic trials this summer in Sacramento, Calif.

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SPRING RAIDERS EAGER TO START

• Sickbert controls Raider defense

Sport: Lacrosse

Year: Senior

Achievement: Sickbert, a third-year varsity defenseman, has played lacrosse for six years. In 1998 and '99, she had 44 ground balls and three goals. Sickbert is also a second-year varsity and a fourth-year volleyball player.

Favorite Memory: "Last year when we played Columbus Academy, we didn't play well the first half, but when it came down to the wire we scored the winning point in the last minute of the game."

Future Plans: Sickbert will attend Allegheny College in the fall, majoring in psychology and playing lacrosse. Her academic record and leadership skills earned her a $6000 per year scholarship.

Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

Sickbert's defense helped the Raiders to a 15-2 record last season.

Jenna Sickbert

"SHE'E A GREAT PERSON TO BE AROUND BECAUSE SHE MAKES YOU WANT TO SMILE." - SOPHOMORE ALEX MARCOTTY

Nicole Majorczyk

• Ranade backhands way to Stanford

Sport: Tennis

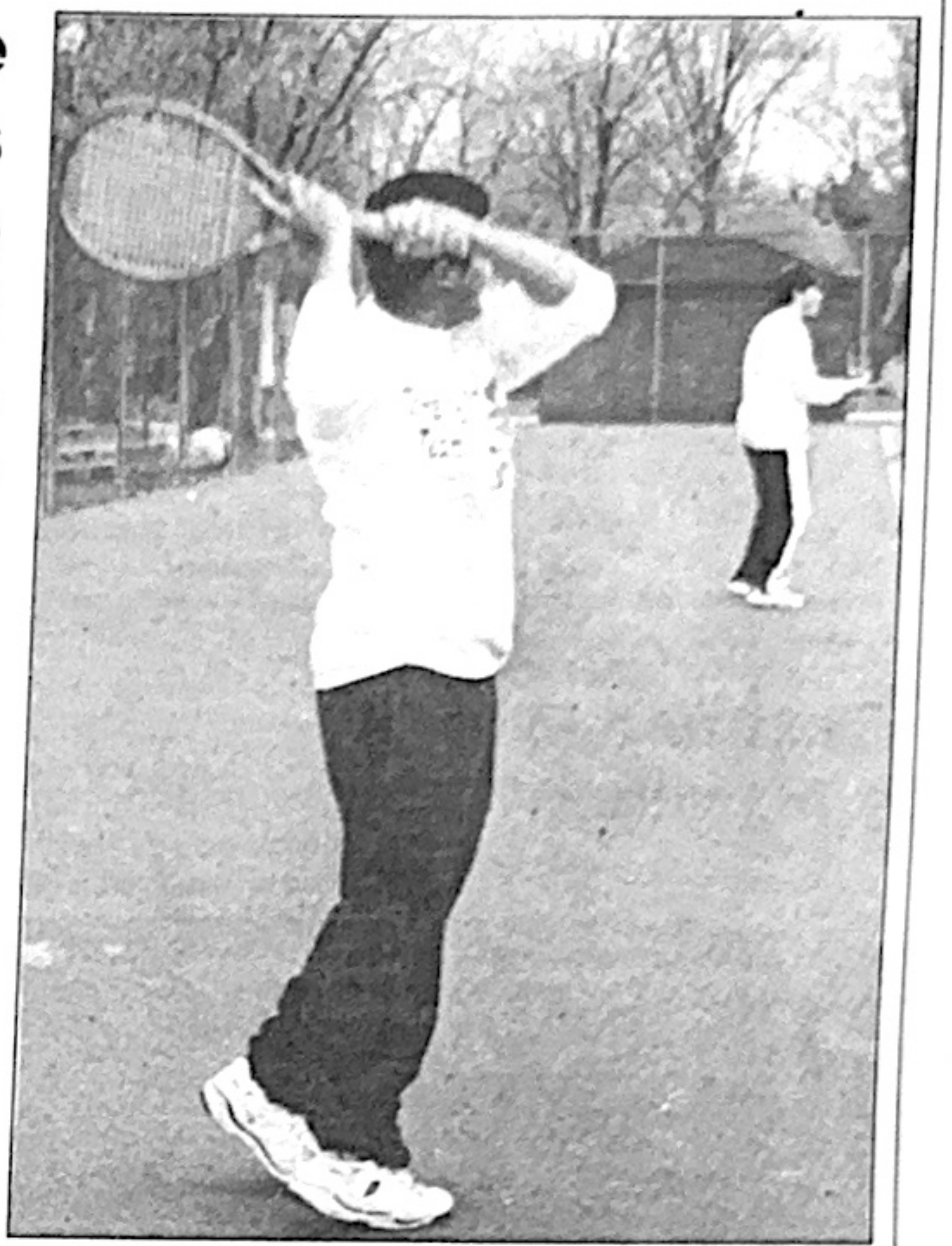
Year: Senior

Achievement: Made it to the state semifinals as a freshman.

Coach's Comment: "Amit is an excellent player as well as a team leader. This year he is a captain and fourth- year varsity player. Amit has been successful playing both singles and doubles." -head coach Allan Slawson

Teammate's comment: "Amit is an exceptional team leader that all of the younger players look up to." -senior Craig Ozan

Future Plans: Ranade plans to attend Stanford University and major in economics.



Mary O'connell/The Shakerite

Senior Amit Ranade practices his back hand in an afternoon practice. Ranade plays singles and doubles.

Amit Ranade

"HE IS A GOOD ROLE MODEL FOR ANY ATHLETE." - SENIOR CRAIG OZAN

Mary O'Connell and Eric Edelsberg

RETIRE

FROM PAGE 16

• Four coaches to leave tradition

she'll miss the most about coaching field hockey is "working with the kids." Her players were also very disappointed to hear of her retirement.

Dietrich said that she'll miss Betley's familiarity and the way she ran practices.

"She made practice more fun and not so strict," Dietrich said.

Sweeney is leaving a clear benchmark behind as he leaves Shaker's men's soccer team for the head coaching post at Hawken.

"He started off with a team without a good record," said senior defenseman Greg Rawson.

During his six seasons at Shaker, Sweeney compiled a record of 63-33-11.

Sweeney led the team to its first Lake Erie League soccer championship in 1996 and also led the team to the district championship game, a loss to Mentor.

"He boosted the level of play Shaker could perform at," said Rawson.

Sweeney said the move to Hawken is a matter of geography.

"It was a good 45 minutes from my office in Kirtland to Shaker," he said about his daily commute to practice.

"The Hawken position came open and it was closer," Sweeney said.

Sweeney said he enjoyed learning about his players lives outside the sport.

"The more you coach the more experience you gain," he said.

He said that at first that he didn't realize how many activities his players were involved in, but he was soon happy to see that his team was made up of more than just a bunch of soccer players.

> *"Even when you're in a teaching position as a coach, you learn a lot."*
>
> HANK KORNBLUT
> wrestling coach

"I always tell people that there's more money academically than athletically," he said.

Kornblut is another coach leaving his position this year. He coached wrestling at Shaker for 14 years and was the head coach for eight of those seasons.

"It's time. I no longer felt comfortable putting that much time and effort into coaching,". said Kornblut, who recently married.

During his time at Shaker, Kornblut said he came to value patience and doing your best.

"Even when you're in a teaching position as a coach, you learn a lot," he said. "There's more to it than winning and losing."

His players also learned a lot from their coach.

According to junior wrestler Brandon Proctor, Kornblut helped athletes exceed their expectations.

"He taught us how to achieve more than what we thought we could," Proctor said.

Kornblut's coaching accomplishments include coaching two state champion wrestlers -- three who placed at the state level, and four who qualified to go to the state tournament. He also led the team to a fourth place statewide finish in 1996 and in that same year was named Cuyahoga Country Coach of the Year.

"He taught us the value of mental toughness," Proctor said.

Rob Bricker, the head coach of the women's soccer team, also decided to leave the sideline. Under his leadership, the team accumulated several of the most impressive records in Shaker history.

In 1998, the team went 12-3-2 -- the first time ever they finished above .500.

Bricker is said he gave up the job because he wants to watch his daughter, junior midfielder Julia, as a parent and not as a coach.

Also, Bricker said that it is simply time for a new coach.

Sports Boosters offer *scholarship*

• $500 sportmanship award to be given in May ceremony

By Jenny Heisler
Sports co-editor

Since 1997, the Shaker Athletic Booster Club has funded the Shaker Raider Award for graduating senior athletes. The $500 scholarship is designated for students who demonstrate leadership both on and off the field, who contribute to the sports program for the good of the all, and who display a strong sense of team.

One female and one male are chosen for this award, judged by the Sports Boosters Scholarship Committee, and announced at the Senior Honor Awards Assembly in May.

"It is not necessarily for the most recognized athlete," Sports Boosters co-president Gillian Graham said.

"It is for someone who contributes to the overall good of the team, regardless of how many accolades they have received."

To apply for this scholarship, students need to fill out an application which is obtainable through either a guidance counselor or the Athletic Department. Students must have a GPA of 2.5 of higher to earn this award.

Students can either submit a coach nomination, teacher nomination or self nomination.

"We just want to stress that the award is out there," Graham said.

SPORT

FROM PAGE 16

• Certain guidelines for varsity sports

Like the cheerleaders, the crew team is also faced with similar problems of recognition. They are not considered a varsity sport, only a club sport.

Some rowers, cheerleaders and parents feel that the two teams are being unjustly treated by school officials, but Athletic Director Dave Sedmak said criteria are in place to determine sport status.

"There are guidelines that we follow before considering a sport to be a varsity sport," Sedmak said. According to Sedmak, the guidelines for adding an interscholastic sport or varsity sport are based on these criteria: credibility of the sport, student interest, OHSAA sanction, competition, facilities, coaches, growth, funding, revenue, scheduling, equal opportunity, transportation, and at least three years of recognition as a club sport.

Cheerleading and crew do not meet the guidelines at this time.

One major guideline is competition. If there is not enough local, regional, or state competition, the activity will not be considered a varsity sport. Shaker's cheerleading squad, like most, competes only at summer camp.

The crew team does compete regularly. However, this year marks crew's third as club sport. Under the department guidelines, crew is not yet eligible for varsity sport status. Another factor in the crew decision might be the location of regattas, which are held in cities such as Cincinnati and Pittsburgh, requiring significant transportation costs.

Men's lacrosse had similar trouble getting established as a varsity sport, but as its popularity grew in the high school and in northeast Ohio, it was recognized as a varsity sport.

Senior rower Biz Turnell hopes the crew team will have good fortune in its endeavor to become recognized.

"I can understand crew being a club sport now because it is young," Turnell said. "But I would like to see it as a varsity sport in the near future."

SPORTS

big BOOST

Sports Boosters offer monetary awards

SPORTS, page 15

By Jenny Heisler
Sports co-editor

No more Mini Marathon?

When I was in elementary school, gym teachers prepared us for a year-end race that everyone called the Mini Marathon. It was a race between students from all of the elementary schools – our one chance to shine athletically in our little second grade kingdom, our one chance to beat our classmates and secure a blue ribbon. Well . . . this one chance was taken away.

Because little Jimmy did not win first place and little Sally lost as well, Jimmy and Sally's parents made the school system change the race to the Fun Run.

Now, for me, as a competition-hungry 8-year old, my dreams were crushed. This little "marathon" had come to mean something to me, and I was proud to say that I had finished in second place in second grade. But I could no longer look forward to that.

The years flew by, and I'm now an athlete at the high school where 22 varsity sports compete during the year and students are naturally expected to support their classmates. However, there is *no* enthusiasm in this school, nor is there any support whatsoever for anyone who does anything!

First of all, our so-called pep rallies are a joke, Half the student body chooses not to attend, and half of the half that does come leave after the first five minutes of this supposedly mandatory event.

And, when classes should sit with each other and support teams with a friendly inter-class rivalry, we are told this competition between classes is not healthy because freshman are too easily identified that way, or because it poses the possibility of violence.

Then, at the conclusion of such an event, I am approached by numerous teachers who wonder why no one has any spirit. Do I even need to answer?

This concern for fairness and the nobody-is-better-than-anyone-else mentality that *supposedly* puts us all on equal ground has instead put everybody in a headlock.

Competition *is* a good thing — the benefit of competition lies in the support it breeds among classmates.

Competition *is* healthy — it fosters awareness of what others are doing and stirs an energy for the effort to prevail.

And, competition *would* add a little spice to these apathetic hallways.

Betley ends 30-year field hockey legacy

• Quartet of coaches agrees 'It's time'

By Laura Barnes
Staff reporter

Field hockey coach Linda Betley, men's soccer coach Patrick Sweeny, women's soccer coach Rob Bricker and wrestling coach Hank Kornblut have all announced their retirement from their jobs at Shaker.

Betley will be concluding a 30-year coaching tenure at Shaker, where she accumulated a lifetime record of 287-97-48. She led the team to the field hockey state tournament eight times, winning in 1991 and coming in second place five times. She also started the field hockey league in northeastern Ohio in 1981 and has led the Raiders to six first place titles in that league.

Her reason for retirement is nothing more than, "It's time." Although she is retiring from her coaching position, Betley will still teach physical education and maintain her area field hockey ties. She is chairwoman of the group that chooses the all-Ohio players and is also on the field hockey advisory board.

Betley said she has learned a lot in her years as coach.

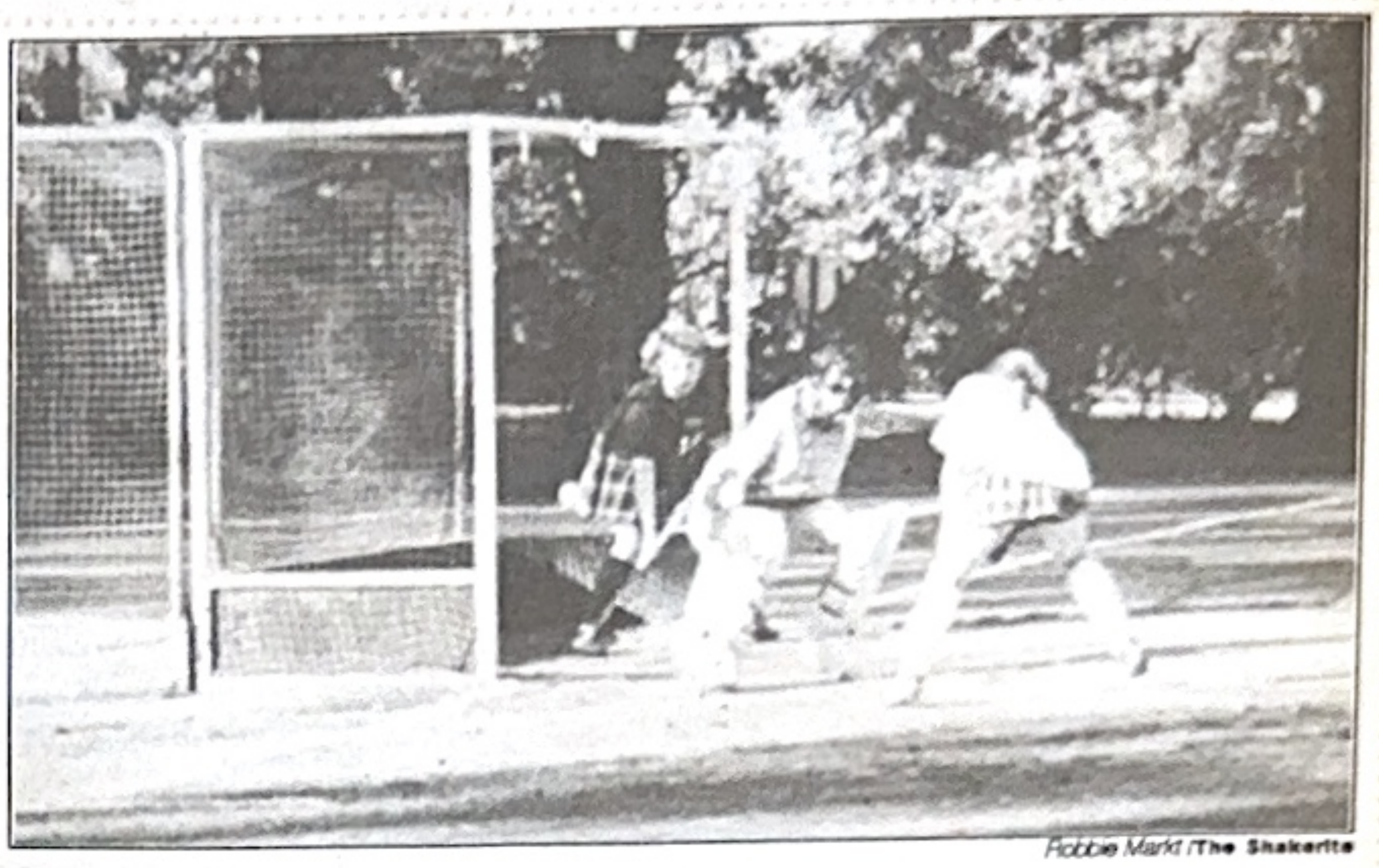
"I learned initially from those I was coaching under," she said.

Sophomore midfielder Claire Dietrich said that her experience and learning did pay off.

"She came to practice with plans and had a lot of experience with our questions," she said. Dietrich also added that having all of Betley's history to live up to was motivating.

Retiring is a choice, but there are always consequences to the choice. Betley said that the thing

SEE RETIRE, PAGE 15



Robbie Markt/The Shakerite

Field hockey coach Linda Betley, along with men's soccer coach Sweeney, women's soccer coach Bricker and wrestling coach Kornblut have contributed to the success of their teams.

Patrick Sweeney

Linda Betley

Rob Bricker

Hank Kornblut

Lawsuits raise questions on sport guidelines

• Athletes wonder why event not considered a varsity sport, questions arouse criticism

By Rich Rund
Staff reporter

What makes a sport a sport? Shaker prides itself on offering the best of academics and athletic opportunities. However, in light of recent local lawsuits concerning eligibility and participation in activities not considered sports, many wonder, what is considered a varsity sport here at the high school?

Last fall, a Solon teen and her father sued the Solon City School District because they claimed she was unjustly denied a spot on the cheerleading squad because of negative teacher evaluations. Her argument was that certain criteria were not considered in sports and should, therefore, not be considered in cheerleading. The case was thrown out of court, with the judge ruling that cheerleading is not a sport.

"There are guidelines that we follow before considering a sport to be a varsity sport."

DAVE SEDMAK
athletic director

Cheerleading is considered a club at Shaker, not a sport. However, sophomore cheerleader Anise Abernathy feels that they should be getting some type of athletic recognition.

"I think it should be considered a sport," Abernathy said. "We have regular practices, we are at every game, and we work hard and take cheerleading seriously."

SEE SPORT, PAGE 15

Brown garners LEL b-ball coach of the year award

• Leads team to first sectional title in over 25 years

By Nicole Majorczyk
Sports co-editor

Head basketball coach Susan Brown earned the All Northeast co-coach of the year award along with the Division I State of Ohio co-coach award. Brown shared both of these awards with Eastlake North coach, Bob Beukl.

"It's indescribable. I'm completely overcome with emotion," Brown said.

Brown said she was surprised to win the awards. Traditionally, coaches who win such recognition have completed state-championship or final-four seasons.

"I'm absolutely flabbergasted," said Brown, who, in her sixth year at Shaker, led the women's basketball team to their first sectional title since the 1970s. The underdog Raiders defeated highly touted Garfield Heights to capture the crown.

Brown said that although she was thrilled to win the award, she is dedicated to the sport and is interested in the success of the team.

"I'm not in this business to win [awards]. I have a sincere passion for teaching the game," she said.

The awards are only two more chapters in Brown's history of athletic success. She has coached for 19 years. In high school, she played basketball and volleyball, ran track and played fast pitch softball in the summers. She helped both her basketball and softball teams to state titles.

The Brown File

- **her high school's hoop team was 72-4**
- **played on two Midwest Conference championship teams at Central Michigan**
- **has coached at Adrian College, John Carroll, Eastern Michigan and Notre Dame College for Women**

HOOP IT UP!

Closing out the first season of the millennium in style, both the men's and women's basketball teams performed well in post-season action. The women's team earned a place in school history, capturing the first sectional title in more than 25 years and going 17-6. Raider coach and Athletic Director Susan Brown was named coach of the year in the state of Ohio. The men's basketball team, after graduating nine key players from last year's state runner-up team, finished a respectable 14-9, bowing out to East High after advancing two rounds in tournament play. Both teams finished the regular season in *The Plain Dealer's* top 25 poll, the women ranked 15th, the men 24th.

Nicole Majorczyk/The Shakerite

The ShakeRONG

April Fools Day

HA HA HA HA
HA HA HA HA
HA HA HA HA
HA HAHA HA

March 32, 1800 • Volume 700 • Issue 20 • Our School Baby Because We Run This • 911 Jibroni Drive • Shaker Heights, Ohio

FRONT LAWN WAR

Front lawn becomes battleground with little space to fight

By Gesse Jiffiths
Fun Page co-editor

As temperatures outside increase, more and more students flock to the patch of grass once known as the front lawn.

For the second year Shaker students face a smaller lawn after construction of a new drive and parking lot.

In years past, when the air grew warm, students of every race, creed and age congregated peacefully on the lawn during lunch periods.

"I wasn't here when the front lawn was a haven of glory, but I've heard many stories and found memories from upperclassmen," sophomore Kendra Row said. "I guess kids used to have a lot of fun out there."

"Back in the day we used to rock it out on the lawn until the cows came home," senior NewAge English said.

"I used to love to play Frisbee on the front lawn, but now those football fools are causing trouble like the dickens. Man I miss the old front lawn," senior Jim Boree said. "It's a good thing I don't have to come back here in the fall."

More fights have broken out due to the lack of grass on which to frolic.

Last week, a massive brawl broke out during eighth period lunch. The clash of interests started off between Frisbee and football players.

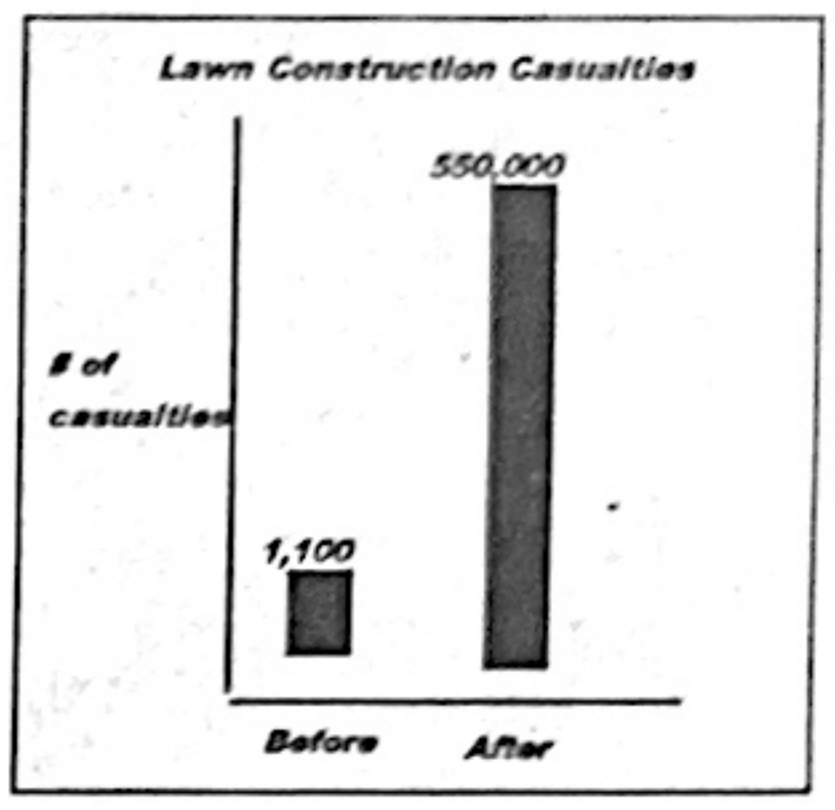
"All I could see was a massive number of Frisbees, footballs and random fruit flying through the air," Donna Qaycong said. "Everything was out of control. I didn't know what was going on."

Many students were severely injured as a result of this brawl.

"Ouch! A ball hit me right in the mouth. Now I can't have babies" sophomore Norom Em said.

The deeply-rooted void growing between the football and Frisbee players is not one that can be easily solved. After much time and consideration, Shaker administrators will take action.

"After much thought, we have decided to create a new



SEE BLADAW PAGE 2

Vovak to aim for White House?

By Duby Megs and Slla Lamols
Mountain Dews co-editors

A press conference scheduled for next Tuesday has political analysts speculating that former Shaker mayoral candidate and editor-in-chief of the popular local newspaper *Movers & Shakers*, Daniel R. Vovak, will announce his candidacy for president of the United States.

"Now that Bill [Bradley] is out, I think he has a good chance of leading this country to greatness," said Irving Gladstone, who is rumored to be a likely choice to manage the campaign should it occur.

Sources close to the potential presidential hopeful said he would take a moderate position on all issues being considered, describing Vovak's political affiliation as "slightly left of the right side of the Democratic party."

According to Gladstone, Vovak should be elected because of his giant door-to-door campaign in which he plans to visit all 125 billion homes in America.

"His calves will get really buff from this campaign," Gladstone said.

As stated by Vovak, his political career began when readers of *Movers & Shakers* asked him to run for mayor.

"He has never had any aspirations for political office before, never taken a political science course of any kind and he has no political experience," Gladstone said. "Yet he managed to almost win the mayoral election of an affluent Cleveland suburb."

Vovak lost the mayoral election by a margin of 75 percent to current mayor Judith Rawson.

"Rawson is a sellout to corporate America. She's secretly working with her husband's law firm to take over Shaker," Gladstone said.

Gladstone asserts that the same applies to his presidential rival, Vice President Al Gore.

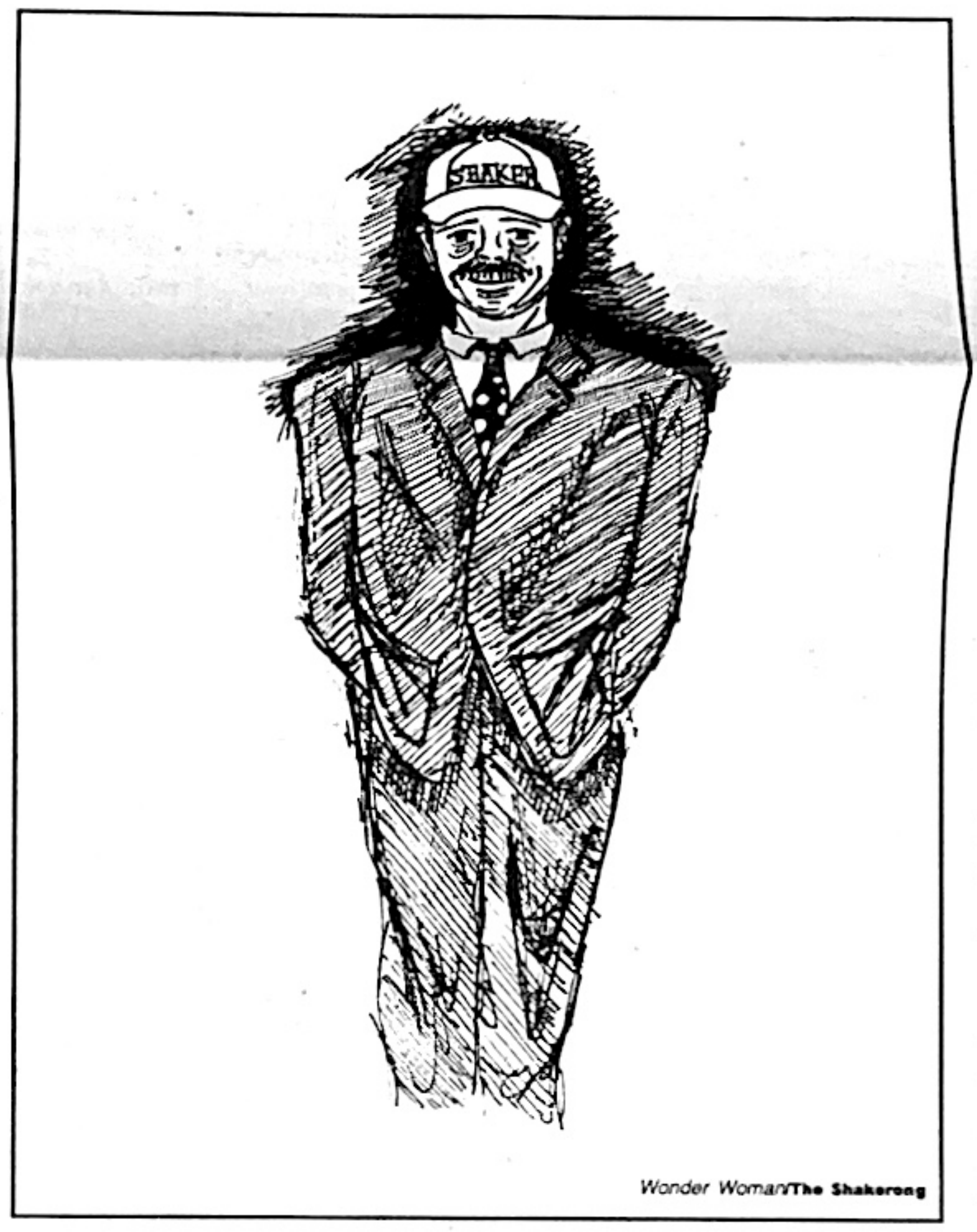
"The man is a puppet of the White House," Gladstone said. "If elected, he will use his position to run the country! Oh, wait a minute . . ."

Vovak decided to enter the Presidential race for the same reason he ran for mayor.

"I wrote him a letter suggesting that he run," Gladstone said. "I don't want him to let the readers down."

SEE SOOKIE PAGE 2

PRINCIPAL POPS MOVES TO OFFICE



Wonder Woman/The Shakerong

By Buru Smuru
Dog editor

He's not from California. He's not from another city. He's from the triangle.

He's Pops, and he's your new principal.

"There are 1,850 students in this school and they're all my kids," Pops said.

Students, beware. Pops is on the prowl, and he's got some new rules to implement immediately.

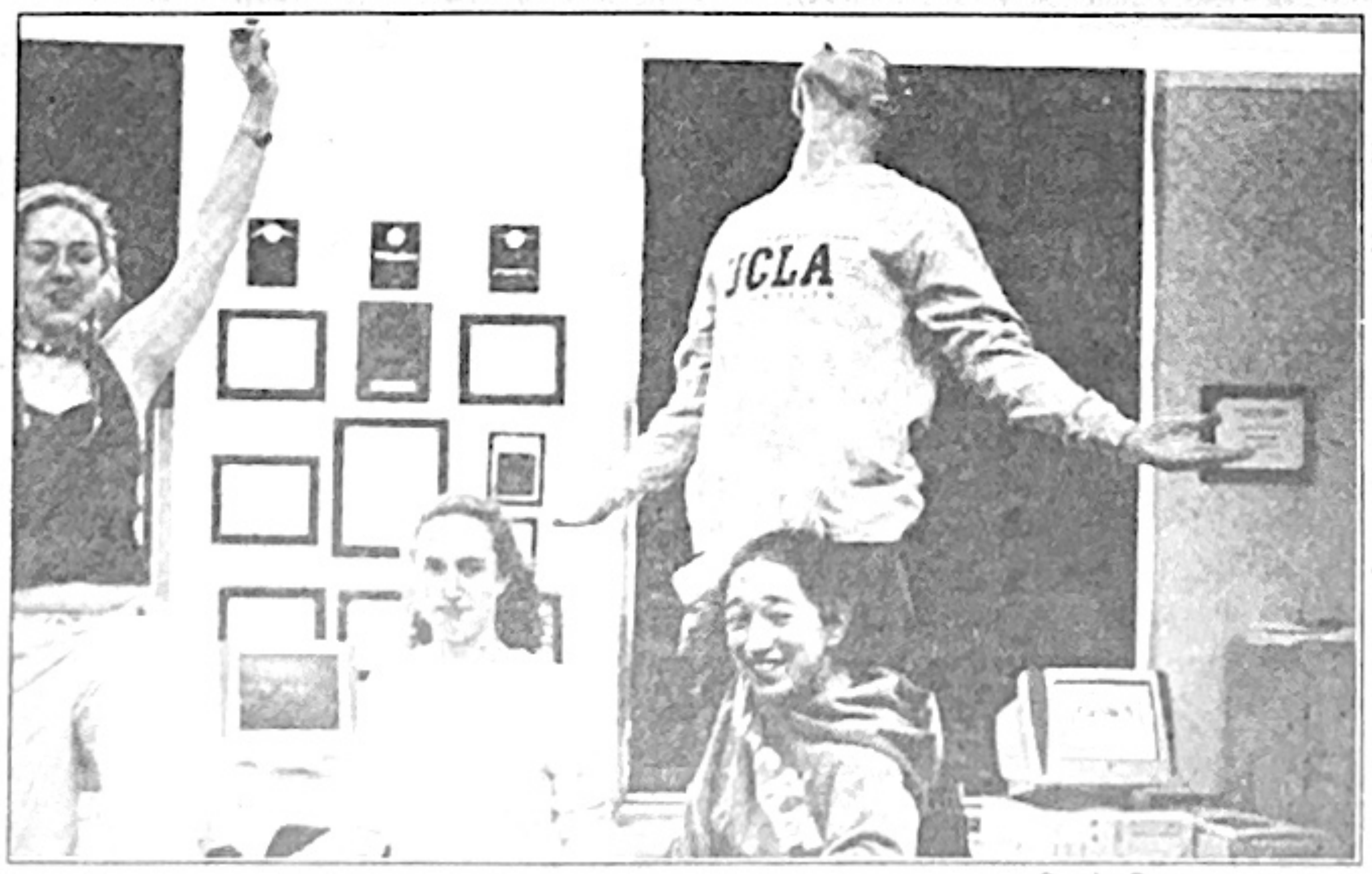
His first act will be to mandate athletic participation. His second rule will prohibit anyone who plays a sport from smoking. The changes will likely cause problems for all those smokers, but with Pops as principal, there's nothing to do.

For those who don't know him, Pops loves his car. "That car is the best blessing this community ever got," he said.

This man is serious. Shaker should not fall off one bit with Pops at the administrative helm.

"We must maintain a high standard of education," he said. "I'm from the old school."

LOOK AT THESE FOOLS



Scooby Doo/The Shakerong

Shakeriters prepare to prepare the best newspaper they can. This includes breathing exercises and special dances. Though one might not understand why, for the Shakerite staff there is no other way to make a newspaper. "We must relax and immunize ourselves from diseases that block the minds of writers so we can be the best," Chief Lia said when asked about *The Shakerite*.

Da 'rite newspaper style

By Love2 I.S. K8
Fun page co-editor

Once a month the fearless staff of *The Shakerite* compiles an issue of one of the greatest journalistic publications you will ever set your eyes upon.

You have always wondered about the motivation behind the collaboration of Shakeriters. You realize that we must be jelly 'cause jam don't shake like that.

Yet you still search hard for the spark that ignites our flame, one that burns only to cook up maximum information for 20 pages of newsprint.

For the first time ever, we release to you the secrets behind the production of *The Shakerite*.

The first thing we do, like any other cult of hard core 'riters, is get in the 'riting mood. We all get together in the center of the room, take off our shoes and perform breathing exercises together. This helps us to focus as a unit.

When we do something right, such as finish a story or unearth a stunning fact, monkeys drop in from the ceiling and perform a Riverdance for us.

On the long deadline nights, when we are at school untill 10 p.m. (jealous?), we have potato sack races around the school. We then reconvene for more breathing and movement exercises.

We express our feelings with

SEE BOOBOOBA PAGE 2

APRIL FOOLS!! APRIL FOOLS!! APRIL FOOLS!! Everything on this page is satirical and not to be taken seriously by readers. APRIL FOOLS!! APRIL FOOLS!! APRIL FOOLS!!

Students might not like a dummy page

• It's no wonder editors are in their office all night on deadlines - this is what your paper might look like otherwise

By My Mom
Staff reporter

There is a suprise at the end of this if you finish the article.

This is what one might call dummy copy. With dummy copy you can fill up an entire page with words. My name is Justin and beside me is Nate. Nate has a sidekick named Dan who thinks he can draw.

This is dummy copy that makes Shakerite editors dizzy with glee. We use it to fill holes in our paper that otherwise would look dumb.

Superman is the greatest superhero ever and anyone who thinks otherwise does not deserve to watch cartoons. For that matter, there have been some great shows on television as of late. I didn't like that dumb fairy tale show on NBC though, it was pretty dumb. This is what one might call dummy copy. With dummy copy you can fill up an entire page with words. My name is Justin and beside me is Nate. Nate has a sidekick named Dan who thinks he can draw.

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Fayaka Sujoka/**The Shakerite**

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For that matter, there have been some great shows on television as of late. I didn't like that dumb fairy tale show on NBC though, it was pretty dumb.

That concludes this dummy copy that none of you just read because it is redundant and, frankly, stupid. But for those of you who made it to the end of this article I have a surprise for you as promised.

Do you know what this surprise is? Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha Ha, It's a Jubilee! Go to it later.

BOOBOOBA

FROM PAGE 1

• More 'rite secrets

lots of hugs. We tell each other everything, for we are a team. We are one uniform body. Here at *The Shakerite*, there is no "I" in unety.

Every 32 minutes we sing "Where is Thumbkin?" and incorporate all the finger movements so that we don't get typitis, a *serious disease in which your typing muscles tighten up.*

By the way, we are not hard working *journalists.* We spend much of our time in the journalism office playing games.

Our computer geniuses have designed a switch that we placed on our Internet lines. One can always find Shakeriters glued to their computers, downloading Pacman and other such entertainment.

As you all can figure out, producing a monthly newspaper is pretty expensive. We need money from more sources than just carnation sales. And so, we, *The Shakerite* staff, have a deal with the Devil.

The Devil is the secret behind all of our schemes, all of our stories and all of our weird breathing exercises. We gave her our souls in turn for funds. The devil is the reason we write so many stories about issues that make you mad.

OK, now all of you may once again sleep at night now knowing the secrets behind your favorite newspaper. I hope you are not disappointed to have realized that we are human, just like the rest of you.

BLADAW

FROM PAGE 1

• Front Lawn War

awareness group," freshman assistant principal Sar Casm said. "It is called Football Loves Fellow Frisbees (FLFF). We plan to go into middle school classes four times a year and teach them the dynamics of sharing a grassy field."

FLFF will be put into effect at the beginning of the 2000-2001 school year. **This is sure to help increase the peace between** lunch time athletes.

"The way things were going, something had to be done. Kids have been lining the perimeter of the field with banana peels and large barrels to protect 'their' space. The way I see it, FLFF is the only way to ensure peace at lunch time in the years to follow," senior class principal Samantha Son said.

The front lawn was home to only a little over 1,000 deaths prior to front lawn construction in almost a century. Since the construction, deaths and injuries have skyrocketed to over 500,000. With these numbers in mind, the FLFF will go into effect soon.

It is projected that by next April, there will once again be love growing with the grass on the lawn. But until then, brawls are in the forecast.

"Stay far away or you may fall victim to the lawn," junior Lawn Moer said. "Your only option is to remain as far from the battleground as possible.

SOOKIE

FROM PAGE 1

HA HA HA

THis IS NOT ACTUALLY THE CONTINUATION OF THE VOVAK ARTICLE. HERE WE TRICKED YOU. IF YOU ARE MAD THEN YOU CAN TAKE IT UP WITH THE EDITOR OF THIS PAGE. IT IS YEAH RIGHT LIKE WE WOULD TELL YOU WHO IT IS THAT YOU ARE MAD AT SO YOU CAN START YELLING. BYE BYE BYE NEVERMIND I STILL HAVE ONE MORE PARAGRAPH TO WRITE THE YOU PROBABLY CAN'T UNDERSTAND BECAUSE THIS TEXT IS SO COOL. IF YOU ARE CRAZY LIKE THIS FONT THEN DON'T WRITE WHEN YOU SPEAK CAUSE NOBODY WILL BE ABLE TO COMPREHEND WHAT YOU ARE SAYING. SOOKIE SOOKIE NA NA I HAVE TO GO BA.

News in the Nation

❶ Staten Island, New York

Method Man and O.D.B. perform at preschool.

At SI Pre School in Stanton Island on March 18, Wu-Tang Clan members Method Man and O.D.B. gave a free concert for students and their parents.

The Wu Tangers performed a nine song set, while amazingly censoring every single curse word in each song. Parents were pleased and the concert was a great success.

However, one child took the theme "Cash Rules Everything Around Me" too literally and pilfered dollar bills out of parents' pockets throughout the performance.

❷ Austin316, Texas

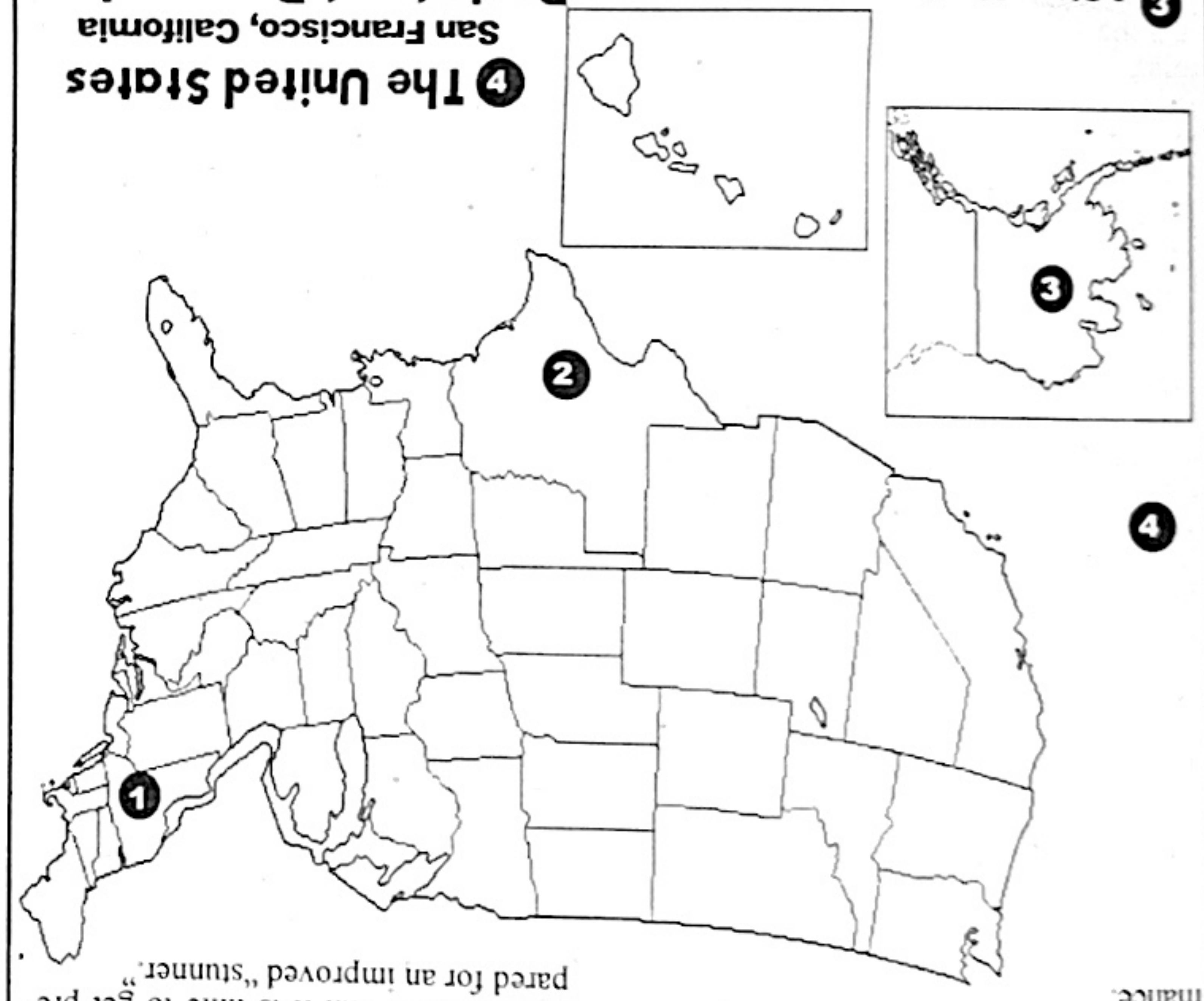
Wrestler spotted without neck brace

On Feb. 16, exactly one month prior to 3/16, WWF superstar "Stone Cold" Steve Austin was spotted without a neck brace.

Austin has been nursing a sprained neck for months now and has been missing in action for the WWF.

When confronted about not having the brace Austin said, "Come 3:16 it will be time for me to whoop your bloop"

Austin said he will be returning soon and we will all see just how injured he is. He added that it is time to get prepared for an improved "stunner."



❸ ACity, Alaska

Does anybody know a city in Alaska?

Nothing ever goes on in Alaska.

If anyone takes offense to this then they don't have reason to because it is simply the truth.

All Alaska has is a couple big blocks of ice and whole lot of ice fishing. What sports do they play? What goes on there?

"I have never heard of anywhere in Alaska besides Juneau," some kid from New Jersey said.

Alaskans are challenged to make their state better or get out of the union.

❹ The United States

San Francisco, California

Backstreet Boys and 'NSync go Bye Bye Bye

According to the FBI, these two prosperous boy bands were abducted by aliens yesterday.

The only vestige that remains is one strand of Backstreet Boy Nick Carter's hair. It will be sold on www.ebay.com for a starting bid of $14 million.

'NSync left a copy of their newly released CD, *No Strings Attached*, with the song "Bye Bye Bye" continuously playing.

Three space shuttles have been sent into outer space to search for the boys.

• APRIL FOOLS!! Everything on this page is satirical and not to be taken seriously by readers.

FJORD

Raider **RADAR**

Your favorite *Shakerite* section is back.
SPORTS, page 15

Head basketball coach up for sale

• You can buy yourselves a Bob Wonson on E Bay, prices may be rising for Raider master

By Comp Man and Partner Comp
Techmaster co-editors

Shaker will be making its first foray into the Internet with a recent decision to auction long-time basketball and golf coach Bob Wonson on the popular web site called Ebay (www.ebay.com). This action was prompted by a district-wide fear that the recent school levy would not pass, and the administration felt it needed a contingency plan.

Even though the levy passed, school officials felt a stapler remover in the assistant custodian's office was a district priority. Hence, it was decided that Wonson would be auctioned anyway.

Coach Wonson was a perfect choice due to his flexibility in coaching two sports and his dynamic and creative teaching techniques.

"He lets us eat and drink in class and if anyone falls asleep he usually doesn't notice," said freshman Lazy Boy.

Furthermore, Wonson's contract included a little-known loophole which allowed the district to sell him to the highest bidder. This clause was exercised when two unnamed school officials and Mary Ann Wonson signed the waiver. The only restriction is that no Cleveland Heights bids will be accepted.

The auction will last for ten days, with a minimum bid of $0.56. The reserve price for the auction will be $10, in order to make sure that the district does not let Wonson go for too low a price. Credit cards, money orders and personal checks will all be accepted.

"I feel the Shaker Heights will greatly profit from this

SEE WONSON, PAGE 19

Coach Bob Wonson poses for his E Bay auction. This talented coach and teacher might be arriving at your front door soon if you are the high auction bidder, and at only 56 cents, he is a steal!

Bob Wonson

Bob Wonson

Bob Wonson

Rickem sickem blosh, Shaker loves squash

• Forget basketball and football, squash team has hopes of state championship

By High Sqeaks
Happy co-editor

Hitting and slamming their way to victory, Shaker prevailed last weekend in the Midwestern Racquetball Invitational.

Winning did not come without cost, however, as junior powerhouse Tonya Lopez was clonked in the nose by rival junior Latif Booboo from Eastern Shore Academy in Hershey, PA.

In the second 15-point game of their best-of-three match, Lopez was outpacing Booboo 12-8, swiftly racking up points toward victory.

In a determined outburst, however, Booboo pounded a shot aggressively into the high right corner, and spectators watched the ball catapult into Lopez's face.

As Lopez fell to the floor, Trainer Bob rushed to the scene, and an ambulance was called to repair Lopez's precious nose. Lopez took a 15minute break and was good to go with a new nose.

In the doubles matches, first team duo Danielle Schmitz and Jess Hausberg just barely out-hit Gertrude Roman and Harriet Holwell from School House Rocks.

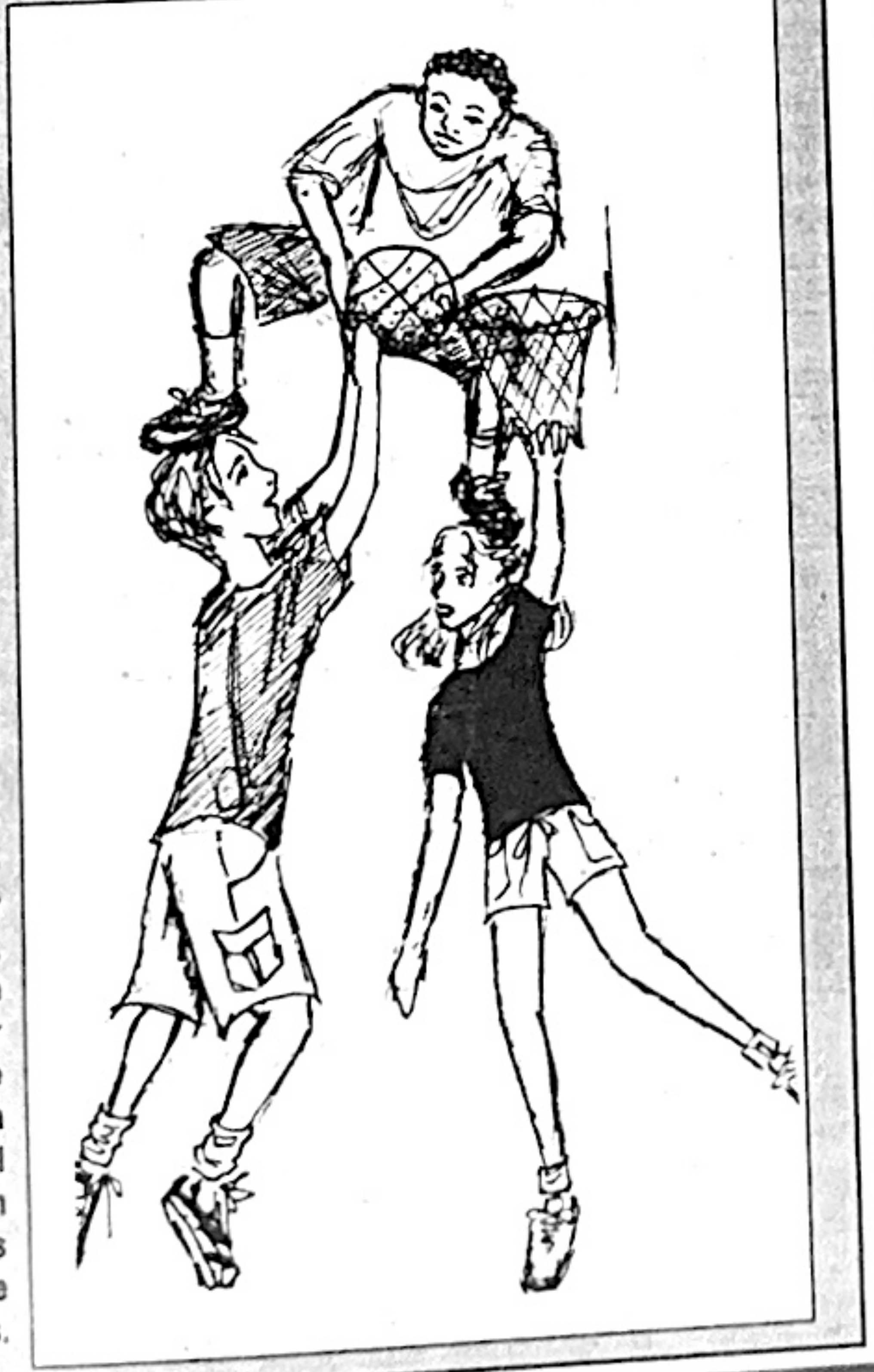
However, after clinching their victory, the pair got in a fight and embarrassed team Shaker by pulling each other's hair out and scratching at each other's faces in front of the crowd.

"I hate when girls act all girly," *The Shakerite* sports co-editor Jenny Heisler said. "This is an embarrassment to my page and that is why the coverage on this story stinks."

SEE SPORT, PAGE 20

SPORTS FOOLS

Shaker athletes cannot be stopped. They play all sorts of sports in many different foolish ways. How can you stop someone who sits above the rim? These kids are trying to dunk and one kid is floating above the rim. "Argh, grrr and shkiii," the player on the left said. "Skibbidy blarn," the athlete on the other side said. Judging by these quotes, Shaker athletes are fools. March madness is all around us even though it is April. Here are some victims.



Shaker's pro wrestling team labled "sport" by district

• Distraught Crew club throws paddles

By Big Daddy
Wresling reporter

One year ago the Shaker Heights High School professional wrestling team did not exist. However on Saturday March 18, the team won the first ever Ohio High School Athletic Association professional wrestling state championship.

The team consists only of seniors Booboo, who is known in the ring as Purple Haze and wrestles in the lightweight division, and Big Daddy who wrestles as Big Daddy in the heavyweight division.

Purple Haze won the lightweight championship in 29 minutes exactly after he hit his opponent Ian "the ian" Kay from Revere High School with a DDT, followed by a flying a chair to the face and then a ladder up the nose. Purple haze won by pin-fall over "the ian" after he started gushing blood out of his ear

"This a dream come true," Haze said, "I have been a wrestling fan all my life and now to be able to win this prestigious title is the greatest feeling a man could have."

Purple Haze added that although people think the sport is fake, they are sadly mistaken. He puts much work into his matches and his psychotic mind set. "Hey, would it be a varsity sport if it was fake?" Purple Haze questioned.

Big Daddy, the other Shaker star, won the heavyweight championship in 115 minutes and 33 seconds after he hit his opponent, Baby Slez of Grand Rivers Academy, with a choke-slam for the pin.

"It is a great feeling to win this title, but I am a man who will accept all challenges, including giving Slez a re-match," Big Daddy said.

The pro wrestling team, like crew, was a club and not a varsity sport prior to this month. However, since there has been

SEE RASTLE, PAGE 15

I like sports, I really do! This being an April Fools page, you are probably thinking something like "ok, what is so foolish about that?"

Have no fear, I'm going to tell you. The foolish part about this is that I quit. If you love a sport how can you quit playing?

I used to be a solid soccer player, one of the best in the grade. What happened? I broke my foot, had one bad season and quit playing. It was ok, though because I loved playing basketball and was sure I was going to make it.

Yeah, that's right I played basketball for the eighth and ninth grade teams at school. What happened? After my ninth grade season I got frustrated with not getting much playing time, let one girl get in my way and that was the end ofthat. When I look back on it, I'm sure I could have at least played well on J.V. and who knows, maybe even made varsity this year.

I have to admit I'm not the kind of kid to whine and cry about the past. But if I could go back to the beginning of high school and do it all over again, I would never have quit playing soccer or basketball. I really could have been something.

I still love both sports. While my foot skills are a little suspect, I feel I can hang with some of the best in the school in basketball. But who knows that besides me? Nobody, because I quit.

The moral of the story on this day of fools in April...Don't be a fool.

If you want something, if you love something, don't quit. Trying and failing is a lot harder to digest than not trying and always wondering. Trust me and don't play the fool.

Don't quit you fool

By Justin Gurney
The Shakerite

APRIL FOOLS!! Everything on this page is satirical and not to be taken seriously by readers.

WHAT IS A RAIDER OF THE MONTH?

• Mascot comes clutch on courts

Sport: Everything

Year: So Old

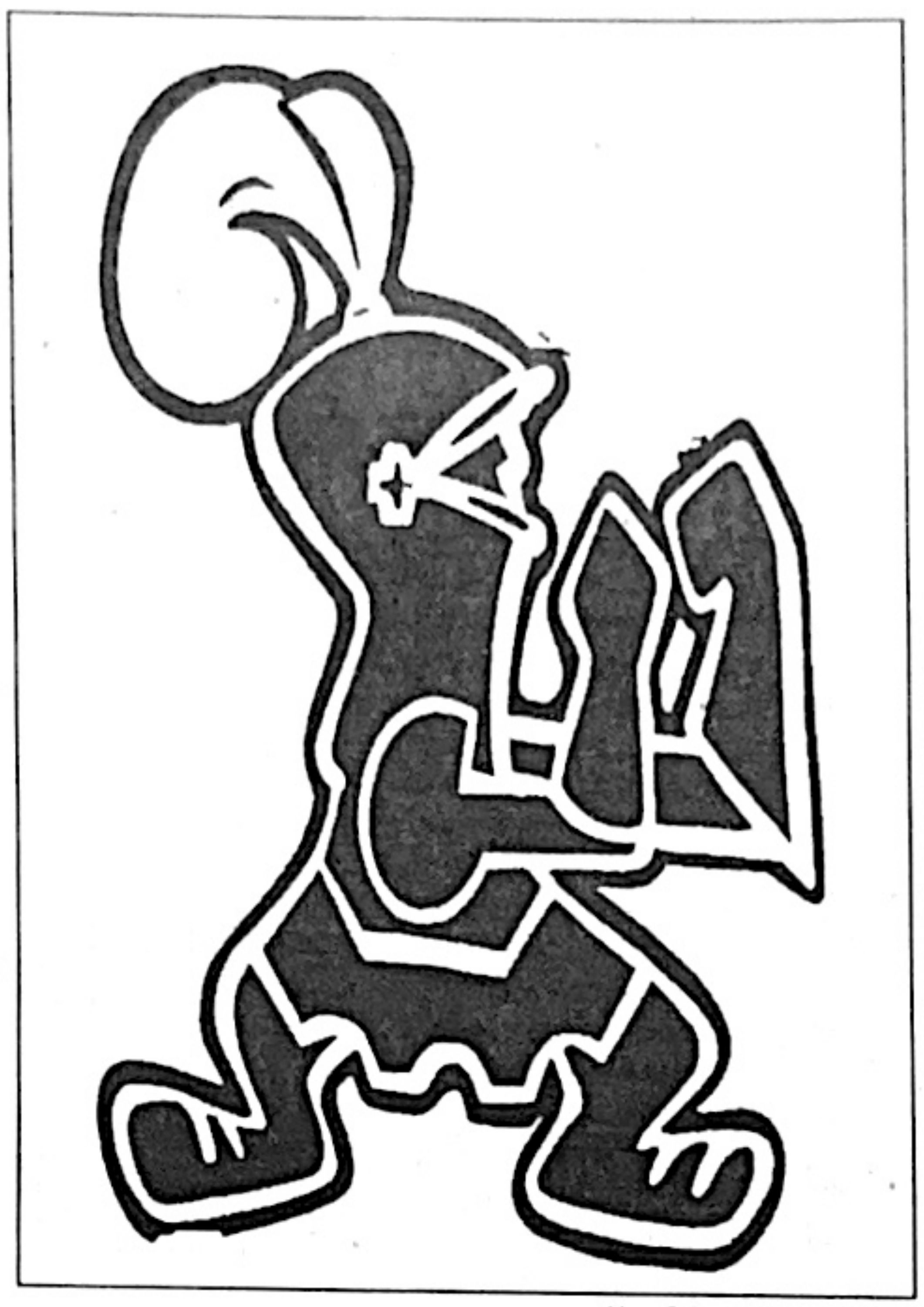
Achievement: This thing is Shaker's mascot for years and years but receives little recognition

Teammate's Comment: "This Raider is an inspiration to us all. We need it."
-sophomore Vince Carter

Favorite Memory: "I don't really have a memory, I am just a symbol not meant to be offensive to anybody."

Coach's Comment: "We would not be the Shaker Raiders without the Raider and I would have nothing to live for if this symbol wasn't in my heart."
-head coach Aphletic Chair

Future Plans: Win! Coming so close the last few years to state titles, the Raiders are looking to bring *home a trophy in the near future.*



Mary O'Connell/The Shakerite

Shaker cannot perform as well as they have to without the help of this fine piece of art.

Look at *this* picture

"I WOULD HAVE NOTHING TO LIVE FOR IF THIS SYMBOL WASN'T IN MY HEART," APHLETIC CHAIR.

• Evil Twin doesn't like us

Sport: Nothing

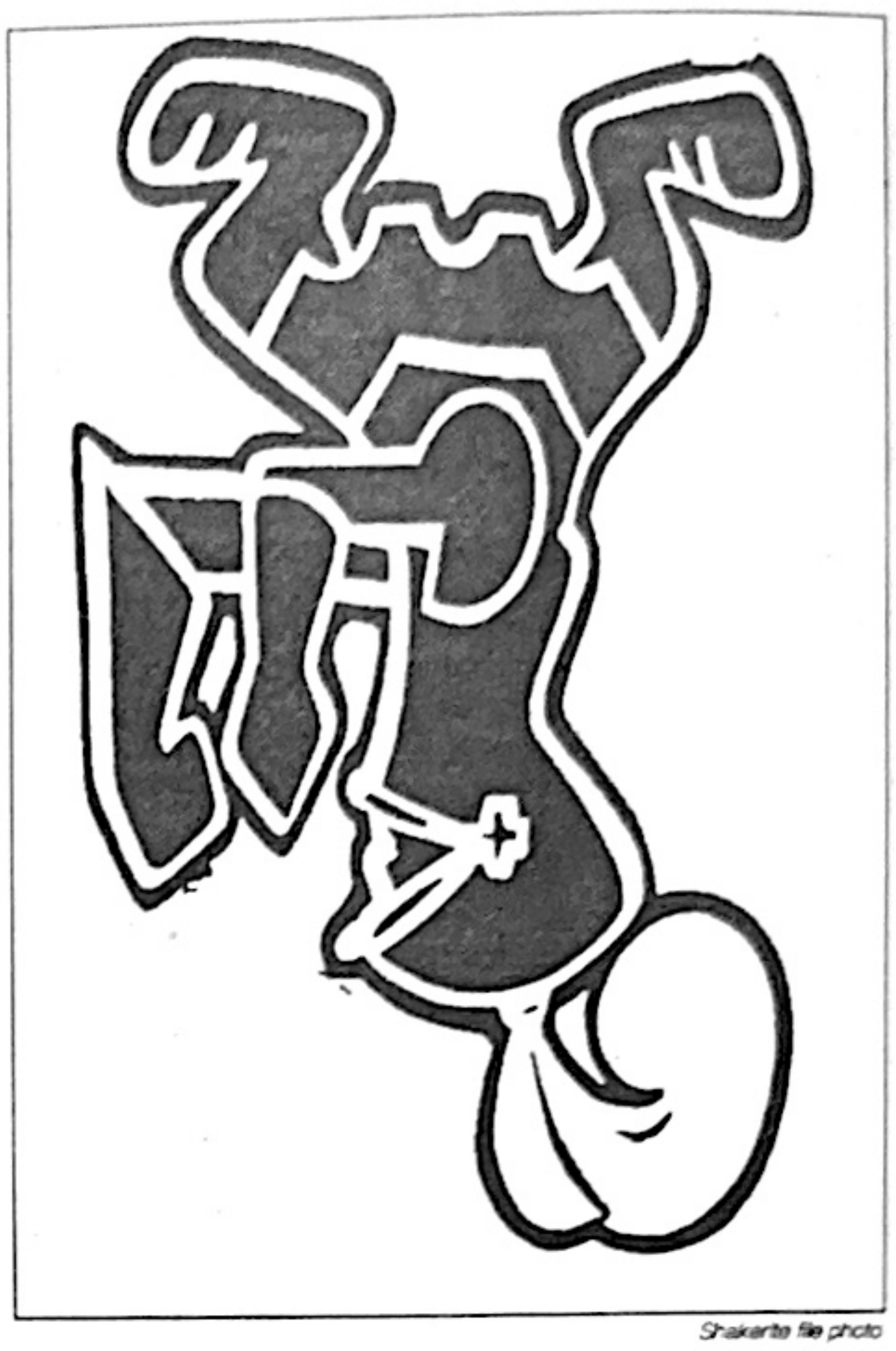
Year: So Old

Achievement: Master of getting everyone in the visitors' bleachers to believe he is the real mascot. Also, he is the sole reason Shaker has not one a state championship in a few years.

Teammate's Comment: No teammates

Coach's Comment: "I don't care about this upside down mascot. He means nothing. For all who don't like the mascot [we had to cut the rest of this quote because there are some bad words]."
-head coach Coach Head

Future Plans: Whine and cry like a little baby until the real mascot is banned from Shaker permanently.



Shakerite file photo

This idiot cannot even take a good picture. He is all messed up because he is not the mascot.

Upside down Raider

"[I CAN'T TALK BECAUSE I'M JUST A PICTURE SO DON'T PAY ANY ATTENTION TO ME]," THIS GUY.

RASTLE

FROM PAGE 80

• Wam Bam Body haze in a daze

growing interest in wrestling, the school has decided to make professional wrestling a varsity sport.

As the decision to make pro wrestling a varsity sport was announced, the women's crew team was visibly upset.

"We have been around longer and have accomplished more than a pro wrestling team ever will. We deserve to get the money the school gives its varsity clubs and we deserve to be recognized," captain Crewissa Sport said.

It was not an easy road to recognition for the pro wrestling team. The team had to raise $3,000 to use the ring at Body Slammers Pro Wrestling gym to practice in.

"The People at Body Slammers were really nice and they helped teach our wrestlers many valuable moves that helped Purple Haze and Big Daddy to win titles," Coach Bod E. Slam said.

"Just remember one thing and that is Purple Haze is here for one reason and one reason only, to win titles and whoop some serious tuchus," Purple Haze said.

> ***"Just remember one thing and that is that Purple Haze is here for one reason and one reason only, to win titles and whoop some serious tuchus."***
>
> PURPLE HAZE
> senior

WONSON

FROM PAGE 80

• Buy him

from this auction. We will be able to purchase new pencils and toilet paper rolls," one anonymous school official said.

Unfortunately, shipping and handling for the coach will be extremely expensive.

"A lot of his coaching includes yells and screams, and anyone from any country can understand that," said a varsity basketball player, who wished to remain anonymous.

Wonson's global studies classes will not be left without a teacher, however. After a long, arduous search throughout the nation, the school district has finally found an equivalent replacement for Wonson: A Furby named Toh-Loo-Ka. When asked to comment on the situation, Loo-Ka responded with the following:

"Ahh! Woahhhhhhhh! Big sound! Me scared! Dance! Dance!"

"Unfortunately, Mr. Loo-Ka constantly falls asleep during lectures. He will also randomly dance in the middle of a test. Also, due to a frightening war experience, Loo-Ka responds violently to loud noises. We must additionally note that he only has a vocabulary of 13 words. Nevertheless we feel this decision will have a positive impact on students," said one anonymous Shaker employment administrator

Wonson's auction page can be found on E bay by searching for "Bob Wonson" or by typing in the following address: http://cgi.ebay.com/aw-cgi/eBayISAPI.dll?ViewItem&item=2948387

"I can't wait to buy my basketball coach," a young golfer with no talent said. "Soon I'll be good."

What's your problem? You come to class every day in a bitter mood because you're up all night doing your homework.

STOP!

Being in a bad mood is worse than getting a bad grade.

Homework means nothing.

Make up an excuse.

Excuses are the answers to everything and will always work. [illegible] have to do is use your brain.

APRIL FOOLS!! Everything on this page is satirical and not to be taken seriously by readers.